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John H. Slick
GALLANT TOM;

OR,

THE PERILS OF THE OCEAN.

AN

INTERESTING SEA-TALE.

BY

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GALLANT TOM.

CHAPTER I.

ASHORE.

"It blew great guns when Gallant Tom
Was taking in a sail,
And squalls came on in sight of home,
That strengthened to a gale."—DIBDIN.

THE moon was shining brilliantly upon the ocean in the port of Plymouth, when a large party of hardy but jolly sons of Neptune were assembled on the pearly white beaches before a small public house, known by the sign of "The Old Commodore," and kept by a superannuated old tar, nicknamed Mat Marlinspike, whose family consisted of his wife, a motherly, comfortable-looking old dame, his daughter, and a handsome boy about twelve years of age, named Richard, and who was supposed to be the nephew of Mat, whom he had kindly taken under his protection on the death of his only sister, about seven years before.

It was the evening before the sailing of the fleet, under the command of the gallant Nelson, when they went to achieve the glorious victory of the battle of the Nile. The grog passed freely round, and so merry had every one become, that the time passed away unheeded, until one of the party rising said,

"Come, messmates, it is growing late, and it is time for us to weigh anchor; so, three cheers for Admiral Nelson, and then away."

The sailors changed their glasses, and drank the toast with an enthusiasm which made the place re-echo again.

"So, my lads," said old Mat, coming forward, "you are homeward bound, then?"

"Why, yes," answered the sailor who had first spoken, "yer see, Master Mat, we must pass a few short hours with sweethearts and wives, for to-morrow morning yon gallant fleet sets sail to join our noble commander in the Mediterranean, to bang the Mounseers, and mayhap many of us may be towed into the port of Eternity, and never see the fair craft again."

"Right, right, my lads," observed Mat; so good night, and may your dreams be of Nelson and victory."

"I say, Mat," said another of the sailors, "where's Tom Main-

stay, that he has not joined us to-night?—for when the mess is abandoned by Gallant Tom, every thing seems as dull as tar without flip. He is a brave fellow, and as taut a sailor as ever reefed a topsail."

"Why, yer see, my lad," replied Mat, "Tom has been to town to buy some trinkums tinkums to leave his sweetheart in remembrance of him, or he would have been abroad with ye, depend upon it."

"Aye, aye," returned the tar, "we must keep a weather eye on the fair craft, Mat. I say, what a happy lass your daughter ought to think herself, to have such a brave fellow as Tom Mainstay for a sweetheart. But, good night; come, messmates."

"Aye, aye," responded his companions, and tossing off the remainder of their grog, they departed to their homes, and the "Old Commodore" was silent and vacated.

"Ah," said Mat, turning to his wife, "there goes as brave a set of lads as ever mounted the quarter-deck of a man-of-war. Splice my timbers, it does my old eyes good to see them. But I say, dame, you look as dull as a frigate in a fog."

"In truth, Mat," said the old woman, sighing, "I am sad at heart. To-morrow morning, with yonder fleet our poor Richard will depart on his first voyage, and when I think of the perils he will be exposed to, my heart sinks within me; for though he is not our own son, his fond endearments have rendered him the very soul and prop of our old days."

"True, true, dame," said Mat, "Richard is a noble boy, and it grieves me to part with him; but he possesses a gallant spirit, and longs to distinguish himself in the service of his king and country, and Heaven forbid that I should put the boy's courage under hatches. Besides, will he not be under as brave a tar as ever furled a sail, our Ellen's sweetheart, Tom Mainstay?"

"But when he is gone," added the old woman, mournfully, "who will be left to cheer us in our old age, and to raise the drooping spirits of our daughter, in the absence of her lover?"

"Trust to Providence, dame," answered Mat, earnestly; "but sit down, my old lass, I have something to tell you—something of importance—'tis a secret."

"A secret!" reiterated his wife, with much curiosity.

"Aye, aye," said Mat, "and one that I long wished to confide to you. But promise, dame, never to divulge what I am going to impart to any one, for on it, probably, the very life of Richard depends."

"Mat, I promise to obey you," returned the dame, earnestly.

"Enough, then," said Mat, taking a seat on one of the benches by her side—"listen."

Just at this moment, the tall figure of a mulatto stalked round the corner of the house, and observing Mat and his wife in earnest conversation, he drew back, and seemed determined to listen. Why he should possess any curiosity to overhear what they were talking about, remains to be told.

This man was called Saib, and was the confidential domestic of

the Earl of Fitzosbert, who at that time resided in the neighborhood of Plymouth. He was looked upon with an eye of suspicion and abhorrence by every one, for he was known to be savage and revengeful, and report was busy in attributing to him and his master many deeds of darkness, but of the truth of which no one had been at the pains of undertaking to ascertain.

"You have ever thought, dame," continued Mat, addressing himself to his wife, "that Richard was the only child of my poor sister, who died about seven years ago, and left him to my care; but it is not so—the boy is no relation of mine."

"Amazement!" ejaculated Margaret. "Who, then, are his parents?"

"That I do not know," answered Mat; "but certain it is that the boy came from noble stock: hows'ever I found him a long way from hence."

"Found him!" reiterated Margaret, with increased astonishment.—"you surprise me, Mat."

"I dare say I do," answered the husband; "but I shall astonish you a great deal more before I have done with my story. You must know—but, hallo!—what do you want?"

"Massa Mat, good evening to you," said Saib, coming forward, when he found that the old man had discovered him.

"Humph!" returned Mat, sulkily:—"oh, good evening to you. You are more free than welcome," he continued, aside. "I never look upon that fellow's face but he reminds me of the devil. If an artist wanted a correct likeness of his Satanic majesty, I don't think he could do better than get Saib to sit to him."

"Let me have a glass of grog, Massa Mat," said Saib, taking a seat. Mat made his exit into the house, beckoning his wife to follow him, and when they had gone, Saib reflected for a second or two, and then clenching his fist, soliloquized:

"My suspicions are all but confirmed, this brat is not the relation of Marlinspike, and his striking likeness to the late earl, almost convinces me that in him exists the young heir to the estates of Fitzosbert. Mat said he found him far at sea:—it must be so:—curses on the billows that did not overwhelm him in the wreck! Fool that I was to trust him to the ocean! Why did I not plunge my knife into their hearts, when they were in my power. It will be a fine tale to tell my master. But no matter, it may be better; this night I am resolved, shall place the boy in my clutches, and if the earl accedes to my wishes, he dies! Yes, the hand of Julia and her wealth must be my reward for the business. Ha! ha! ha! She calls me black dog. She shall find that the dog can bite."

"Here's your grog," said Mat, returning from the house.

"And here's your money," answered Saib, vexed at being interrupted in the train of his thoughts; "and now you can begone."

"Oh, to be sure, Master Japan," returned Mat, sarcastically, "I'm not fond of looking on the likeness of——"

"Of what?" angrily demanded Saib.

"The devil, to be sure," answered Mat, with a laugh, as he retired into the house.

"The Christian dog," cried Saib, as he vanished; "but no matter; they shall find the black man as true a devil in heart as he is like him in visage."

At this moment the voice of a boy singing at no great distance sounded in his ears, and soon afterwards a boat approached the shore, containing Richard. Saib recognized him in a minute.

"Here's the brat they have been speaking of," said he. "What a fool I must be not to know him before, for he is as like the late earl as ever child was like the parent. He comes:—now if the old man and his guest will only keep snug to the house for a few minutes, I'll spoil your singing, my boy."

Richard having stepped from the boat, bounded gaily towards the house, when he suddenly recognised Saib and started back.

"Oh!" said the boy to himself, "there is that frightful black man, the servant and confident of the Earl Fitzosbert. I don't know how it is, but whenever I look upon his sable countenance, my heart sinks with horror. I'll run into the house, and meet my good uncle and aunt, and my coz, Ellen."

"Stop, boy," cried Saib, as he attempted to enter at the doorway; "why do you pass me as though I were something contagious?"

"I am in a hurry, good Saib, and—"

"Good Saib," laughed the black, sarcastically. "Ha! ha! ha! But, no matter,—drink, boy, drink."

"Excuse me, Saib," said Richard: "I am too young to drink; I—"

"Oh, you'll not drink with me, I suppose," interrupted the other, scowling, "because I am a black man."

"No, Saib," replied the boy, firmly, "You wrong me; Heaven forbid that I should be so ungenerous as to despise a fellow creature only for the color of his skin. I *will* drink, just to prove to you how mistaken you was in forming such a supposition." And he took the glass from the hand of Saib.

"Here's to all gallant tars!"

"Would it were poison," Saib muttered to himself.

"And now, Saib," said the boy, "I must be going, so good night."

"Hold, boy," cried Saib, suddenly starting upon his feet, and grasping his arm, "you must come with me."

"Spare me, Saib; don't hurt me; I never injured you!" exclaimed the terrified Richard, as the black attempted to drag him away; "what mean you by this violence?"

"Ask no questions, brat," fiercely cried Saib; "come, come."

"Savage man, unhand me!" ejaculated Richard, struggling hard to escape from his hold; "you must have some cruel design against me, for what reason I know not. I will alarm the inn!"

"Boy," observed Saib, his eyes rolling savagely, at the same time drawing a knife from his vest, "utter a word that may be heard but a yard off, and I'll murder you on the spot."

But in spite of this threat, Richard shrieked with all his might, and at that moment a hearty voice was heard outside, shouting—

"Hilly yeo! hilly yeo!" and just as Saib was dragging him away, in rushed Tom Mainstay, and clutching the throat of the black with the strength of a lion, dashed him to the earth, at the same time wresting the knife from him, and holding the boy under his protection.

"Why, you black pirate," cried the sailor, "damme, if I hav'n't a good mind to lower your topsails in less time than a boatswain could pipe all hands! Sheer off, yer swab, or may I never taste salt junk again, but I'll send you to old Davy like a shot!"

As Tom Mainstay stood over the black ruffian, and thus taunted him, the eyes of the latter rolled fiercely in their sockets, and he was almost choked with rage.

"Tom Mainstay," exclaimed he, gathering himself on his feet, "the black man never receives an insult without having a deadly revenge. Beware, when next we meet."

Thus saying, Saib skulked away, and the sailor laughed at him contemptuously. "Ha! ha! ha!" said he, "boldly spoken, my sable land-lubber; but Tom Mainstay has weathered many a rough tempest at sea, and it would be strange indeed if he was now to be frightened by a storm in a puddle on shore. Why, Dick, you seem alarmed."

"Alarmed!" answered the boy, proudly; "oh, no, Tom, you mistake me, I am only a little ruffled, for you know I am to be a sailor, and I should not have liked to have been deprived of the opportunity I expect to have, of helping to drub the foes of my king and country."

"Splice my timbers!" cried Tom, shaking the boy's hand heartily, "a sailor already, every inch of him. But weigh anchor, and steer into the forecabin, for you see, here comes my pretty Ellen, bless her blue twinklers."

Richard obeyed this order, and left Tom to talk to his sweetheart. Ellen was considered the flower of Plymouth. Her features were regular, and bewitchingly handsome; her eyes were a brilliant blue, her figure was perfect, and she had the prettiest little foot, and the most graciously turned ankle, that could possibly be imagined.—To Tom she was fondly, devoutly attached, and the thoughts of being so soon separated from him, and the uncertainty of ever beholding him again, wrung her gentle heart, and clad her face in looks of the deepest sorrow.

"Now, my pretty Ellen," said Tom, affectionately throwing one arm around the damsel's waist, and pressing her hand fervently, "tell me why you will persist in hoisting signals of distress?"

"Ah, Tom," replied Ellen, "how can I be otherwise than sorrowful? Are you not going to leave me to-morrow, to be exposed to all the terrors of a dreadful conflict, and should you perish—" She hid her face in her bosom, weeping, and could not finish the sentence.

"Come, come, my lass," said Tom, soothingly, "you must not founder in the ocean of despair. I have weathered many a hard fight and a rough gale hitherto, and we must trust to Providence to protect me through this."

"Oh, Tom," observed Ellen, "I dare not think of it."

"Now shiver my timbers!" ejaculated her lover, "if you put your pumps to work, you'll set my heart going at the rate of forty knots an hour. As our chaplain says when he is about to swallow a good jorum of rum,—' Damn fear, always keep up your spirits.' Come, lass, give us a kiss!—Lor' love your pretty face. Yer know this is to be my last cruise, Ellen: and after I have assisted in banging the Mounseers, I shall return home with lots of prize money, a whole cargo of love, get spliced to you, embark on the ocean of matrimony, and in a short time, mayhap, become the commander of a fleet of my own."

"What mean you, Tom?" inquired Ellen, timidly.

"What do I mean, lass," answered her lover, "why, the pretty small craft that we shall have, to be sure." And once more kissing the blushing cheek of the maiden affectionately, he stepped with her into the house, where Mat and his wife were engaged in earnest conversation upon the late outrage committed by Saib, and in vain endeavoring to conjecture what motive could have incited him to it.

The Earl Fitzosbert had a handsome mansion near the house of Mat Marlinspike. He was a proud, haughty, and tyrannical nobleman, with a forbidding countenance, and one who was universally hated. He was immensely rich; but there were strange rumors afloat as to the manner in which he obtained his wealth, which, if they were true, would make the earl a villain indeed. He had a ward named Rosina, a beauteous girl, of the most amiable manners and disposition, and she was greatly pitied, for it was well known that she suffered much from the capricious and tyrannical disposition of her guardian, and the insolence of the black man, Saib, who exercised authority over his master, and knew all his secrets.

A deep melancholy always seemed to absorb the feelings of Rosina, from which it was in vain to attempt to arouse her; it was evident that her mind was suffering from some secret grief; but no one could imagine what it was, for she carefully evaded every question on the subject.

"Why do you give way to these fits of sadness, Miss?" observed Patty, her maid, on the day upon which we commenced this narrative. (Patty was a great favorite with Rosina, and she confided to her breast many secrets.) "To be sure," continued Patty, "the earl does not behave kind to you."

"The earl!" reiterated Rosina, "oh mention him not; his very name is odious to me. Oh, my poor father, little did you think when you committed me to the care of that man, to what misery you was consigning me. Patty, I am wretched; even that hideous wretch, Saib, who is the confidant of the earl, has presumed to insult me with his odious passion, and the earl appears to encourage him. But this is not all that oppresses me."

"Dear me, Miss," observed the waiting maid, "why, any one would imagine you were in love!"

Rosina sighed, blushed, and hid her face for a moment in her handkerchief. "Alas! there it is, Patty," she replied, "I do indeed love one who can never be mine!"

“ What won’t he marry you, Miss ? ” said Patty ; “ then I am sure he shows his want of taste, and does not pay his compliment to your charms and accomplishments.”

“ Listen, Patty,” remarked Rosina, seriously, “ and divulge not what I am about to tell you. He, who holds my heart, knows not of the passion he has inspired. He is betrothed to another, a worthy girl, and deeply do I repent the injury I am doing her, by encouraging an affection for him to whom her very soul is devoted. But alas ! I cannot stifle my feelings.”

“ You surprise me, Miss ! ” ejaculated Patty ; “ but may I ask who is the youth that has thus taken possession of your heart ? ”

“ You remember the night, Patty,” answered her mistress, “ when our boat upset at some distance from the shore, and I was immersed in the rapid tide, and was near being drowned—at that critical moment, a sailor plunged fearlessly into the deep, and at the imminent peril of his own life, brought me to shore ? ”

“ Ah,” remarked Patty, “ well do I remember that, Miss ; it was gallant Tom, as he is called, one of the bravest seamen in the fleet.”

“ He is, indeed,” said Rosina, eagerly, and her blue eyes sparkling with pleasure at the thought : “ from that moment, Patty, I have loved him.”

“ Lor’ bless me,” exclaimed the maid, “ how you surprise me. What, love a common sailor ? ”

“ Accursed forever be the wretch,” cried Rosina, warmly, “ who would despise honest poverty enshrined beneath a sailor’s jacket. Oh, Patty, little can you imagine the feelings I bear toward that noble youth ; something more powerful than love seems to endear him to me ; his strange likeness to a brother whom I lost in childhood is so great, that in spite of everything I cannot erase him from my thoughts. Mine has been a strange life. As soon as I can remember, I found myself, with an only brother, the inmate of a fisherman’s hut some miles hence. We thought he was our father, although the cruelty with which he treated us, made us fear, if not hate him. My poor brother, who was then three years older than me, loved me fondly, and his chief delight was to wander to the sea-beach, to gather the pretty shells and pebbles to amuse me. One evening he went there alone, as usual ; night set in—the next morning broke, but my poor brother never returned, nor have I since been able to learn what become of him.”

“ Poor fellow,” exclaimed Patty.

“ A short time afterwards,” resumed her mistress, after a pause, “ our real father, who was rich and noble, came to claim us. His motive for so long neglecting and disowning his children, I never knew. He was wretched at the mysterious disappearance of his son ; but though he tried every means, and offered large rewards, he never could gain any tidings of him. He died three years since, and made his friend, the Earl Fitzosbert, my guardian.”

“ What a melancholy story ; and you say that Gallant Tom is so like your poor lost brother, Miss ? ”

"The very image of him ; and did I not know it was impossible, could fancy it was him. He haunts my imagination, sleeping or waking. Patty, I cannot live but in his presence."

"Oh, Miss, pardon me, but I must say you talk very silly," observed Patty ; "why, to-morrow morning you know Tom sets sail with the noble fleet, now lying at anchor in the port."

"And thither will I follow him," suddenly exclaimed Rosina.

"Impossible!"

"You may deem me romantic, Patty," returned the lady, "but I am resolved ; I can no longer endure the tyranny of the earl, and the insolence of Saib ; so I have determined to assume the male attire, and get on board the same ship in which Tom is to sail. I have ascertained that there will be no great difficulty, as her number is not complete. Then, and then only will I venture to avow my love for him, and throw myself and fortune at his feet. Patty, you'll not betray me ?"

"Betray you Miss ?—lor' bless you, not for the world. But this is indeed a romantic idea—a female sailor!—but, dear me, have you well considered the perils of the undertaking ? You know they are going to fight, and suppose you should be killed ?"

"I have considered everything, Patty," replied the lady, "and I am ready to encounter every danger. I secured everything necessary for my design, and this night, as soon as the family are at rest, I bid adieu to this hateful house for ever."

"Heigho!" sighed Patty ; "and so you mean to leave me all alone, Miss ?"

"What other alternative have I ?" answered her mistress.

"Why, I'll tell you," observed Patty, smiling archly ; "I have got a sweetheart, you know, Miss, and a nice little man he is, too, only not very brave. Toby Twitter, Miss, and he's going on board the same ship as Gallant Tom is, to-morrow ; so I have been thinking, if you have no objection, I should dearly like to put on male attire, also, and accompany you in this adventure, if it is only to watch the conduct of my poor Toby."

"I shall be delighted with your company, Patty," said her mistress, joyfully.

"Then it's a bargain," ejaculated the maid. "From this moment consider me a sailor. Huzza ! the blue jackets forever ! Oh, Miss, shan't I make a jolly Jack tar ?"

"Hark !" said Rosina, putting her finger on her lip, "I hear the voice of the Earl and Saib ; they are approaching this way. Let us begone, Patty, and make preparation for our perilous adventure."

"Oh, yes, Miss," said Patty, "come along, for I am all impatience to put on the breeches. They do say that our sex have a peculiar *penchant* for those little unwhisperables."

"Saib," exclaimed the Earl Fitzosbert, to his sable myrmidon, as they entered the room, having looked cautiously around, to ascertain that nobody was observing them, "this tale you have told me of the brat being still alive, perplexes me."

"Why should it alarm you, my lord?" returned the black, "have I not said that I have the means of ridding you of him this very night?"

"But should you again fail?"

"Psha! the black man's knife seldom misses his aim. You know its power now, my lord; the proud estates of Fitzosbert came not into your possession without—"

"I know, I know!"—hastily interrupted the Earl; "but should this hated boy be suffered still to survive, in time all may be discovered, and my dearly-earned power wrested from me, and ignominy and disgrace may light upon me."

"I have offered you the means to rid you of your fears," answered Saib; "will you accept them?"

"The terms are high," said Fitzosbert, "the hand and fortune of my fair ward, Rosina—"

"Must be mine," rejoined his companion. "Swear that, and my dagger shall be washed in the heart's blood of the young heir of Fitzosbert this very night."

The Earl paused, and traversed the room for a few moments buried in rumination, then suddenly returning to his confident, he said:

"I will agree."

"Enough, then," cried the black, his large eyes rolling with gratification; "this instant I fly to execute the crime."

"Thanks, thanks, my good Saib," replied his master, "and when next we meet, the heir of Fitzosbert—"

"Will be no more," added the black, hollowly, as he hastened from the apartment, and left the Earl to retire to his chamber.

Three o'clock had chimed from a neighboring church clock, however, before the villain Saib started on his deed of darkness. He had ascertained that Richard slept in a room on the ground floor, and he had provided himself with proper implements to force the shutters so that he might gain access to his destined victim. All was still around when Saib arrived at the little tavern. Every one had retired to rest, and the moment seemed propitious to his purpose. He walked round to the back of the house, and easily scaled the paling with which it was surrounded. He walked up to the window of the back parlor, the room in which the boy slept, and listened: he could hear the strong breathing of the unconscious sleeper, and was convinced that everything favored his purpose.

"All's right; that sleep shall be changed into an eternal one," ejaculated the wretch, as he applied the implements he had brought with him for the purpose, and forced the shutters open with very little noise. He looked into the room, and beheld the boy reclining, dressed upon the bed, and no other person was in the chamber. Cautiously the villain opened the window, and the next moment was standing over the couch of the sleeping boy, with the knife in his hand, ready to perpetrate the hellish deed.

"I have succeeded famously," he muttered to himself. "All is still; no person will hear his dying groans, and I may escape unper-

ceived and unsuspected. Now for the deed ! Die ! die ! d—d offspring of a Christian dog."

Instantly he was about to draw his knife across the throat of the boy, when, suddenly, his arm was fiercely seized. He looked up, and beheld Tom Mainstay standing before him, with a pistol presented at his head, and attended by several more sailors.

" Hold, you black shark !" exclaimed the gallant sailor, or "damme, I'll send a bullet through your mizen-top."

At this critical moment, the noise awoke the boy, who started from his bed in astonishment and alarm, while at the same juncture Mat and his wife entered the room in a state of consternation, which was not a little increased in the spectacle that presented itself.

" For heaven's sake, what is the meaning of this ?" inquired the old man and his wife, in the same breath.

" The meaning, Master Mat," answered Tom,—" why, I'll tell you : I had occasion to steer past the mansion of the Earl Fitzosbert, in company with my messmates, when we saw this black lubber cruising about suspiciously on the coast ; so we gave chase to him on the sly, and watched him here, where he was about to lay his grapping irons on young Dick, but we were lucky enough to prevent him.

" Villain," ejaculated Mat, " what is your design ?"

" His life," answered Saib, his eye flashing with fury.

" Why, you damned pirate," said Tom, " say another word like that, and I'll send a brace of bullets through your brains. I say, messmates, what will we do with him ?"

" Why, I'll tell you what, Tom," replied one of his companions, " to prevent him from doing any more mischief, suppose we take him on board ship, where a shot from the enemy, or the cat, will soon teach him to behave himself."

" Well said," agreed Tom Mainstay ; " bind the lubber, and aboard with him."

The black tried hard to escape, and he foamed at the mouth with rage ; but his efforts were all useless ; a strong cord was procured, and the sailors, having secured his arms, proceeded to drag him out of the house.

" Tom Mainstay," cried the infuriated wretch, fixing upon the sailor a look that was truly demoniacal, " for this, the curse, the bitter curses, of the black man be upon your head !—Revenge ! Revenge !"

" Away with him," said Tom, laughing scornfully at his threats. " Well," he continued, " we have disposed of that black rascal pretty well, I think ; and now, Mat, you must bestir yourself, for day begins to peep, and already the sailors are steering down here to get the grog abroad before they bid adieu to old England for some time. Come along, I go to join my messmates outside the house. Ship a-hoy, there !"

Early as it was, the sailors began to bustle to the little hostelrie ; and when Tom went outside, he found a good company assembled on the seats, and who were as merry as if they were going to a wedding, instead of upon an enterprise attended with so much danger.

"Good cheer, my lads," said Gallant Tom, when he joined them ; "the morning has at length dawned when we are to bid adieu to England for a while, in search of glory ; so come, boys, pitch the blue devils overboard, and let's have a good jorum of grog at parting. Mat, you are steward of the mess, my old boy, so weigh anchor and bring the flip."

Mat did not require to be told a second time, but hastened into the house to obey the order ; in the meantime, the men who had had charge of Saib, rejoined their companions.

"Well, Tom," observed one of them, "we have towed the black hulk on board, and he's safe enough. The lubber does not seem to relish salt water."

"Well done, my lads," said Tom, approvingly ; "I'll warrant we shall soon tame him. But here's the flip, so fill your glasses, bumpers all, and I'll give you a toast :—

"Here's may all foul cruisers split upon the rock of despair, and founder in the ocean of oblivion."

The sailors drank the toast with the greatest enthusiasm, and by that time the sweethearts and wives of several present made their appearance, and the scene became one of the most animated description.

"Here are the fair craft," said Tom Mainstay, as the females made their appearance ; "bless their pretty faces, they look more beautiful than ever, although they are overcast with the clouds of sorrow at the thoughts of being parted from their sweethearts. Come, messmates, yard-arm and yard-arm with the lasses, and then once more for mirth !"

There was a general kissing and embracing of the females at this hint, and then they all seated themselves at the tables to take a parting glass.

"Ah, that is what I like to see," observed Gallant Tom ; "there's nothing gives such pleasure to the sailor's heart as to have the petticoats abroad. I wonder where my little Ellen is ; I suppose she hasn't got out of her hammock yet. Ah ! here she comes !"

At that moment Ellen came from the house and approached her lover. Her face was overcast with gloom, and tears escaped her eyes, as Tom affectionately took her hand.

"My pretty Ellen," exclaimed the sailor, "how it glads me to see you,—but splice my topsails, you will persist in hoisting these confounded signals of distress. Why, any one would think I was going to a funeral instead of on a voyage of pleasure."

"Pleasure, Tom," returned Ellen ; "oh, can you call the horrors of war by so gentle a name !"

"Why, look you, my lass," replied Tom ; "there cannot be a greater pleasure in the world to a true tar than fighting. The roar of the cannon is music to his ears, to which he never fails to make the enemies of his country dance against their will, and Death is the only master of the ceremonies, who sometimes takes it into his head to ship a few of the actors in the ball on board his craft. Come, come, don't give way to despair, my girl."

"Bravo!" shouted one of the sailors, "Gallant Tom's the lad for getting the weather-gage of care. Come, pretty lass, stow yourself alongside of yer sweetheart, and be happy."

"To be sure she will," said Tom, again kissing her. "Messmates, I must give you another toast, and I know it is one in which you will all join: 'Here's to the sailor's home, the bosom of the girl he loves!'"

"Hurrah!" shouted his companions. "The sailor's home!"

"Messmates," observed Tom, as Richard approached him, "this is my pro-pro-protogee, don't they call it? Yer see, I am not much used to the land lubber's palaver; and if the young dog disgraces his master, damme, I'll throw him overboard as food for the sharks!"

"Ship a-hoy!" shouted two or three voices outside, and Tom looking towards the road which led up to the house, said:

"Hallo! what's in the wind? Oh, it's Dick Clewline coming this way, and towing two of the most dainty looking craft along with him that ever I seed."

The dainty looking craft to whom Tom so pointedly alluded, were Rosina and her maid, Patty, in male attire, who, having left the house of Earl Fitzosbert as soon as they imagined all the family had retired to rest, had fallen in with Dick Clewline, who offered to get them an opportunity of entering on board the same vessel as Gallant Tom, if they would place themselves under his care.

"Here you are, my lads," said Dick, when they had got to the house, "safe in port; Gallant Tom, there, will give you all the information you want."

"He is there," said Rosina in a whisper to her attendant, "and my unsuspected rival, too; oh, how my heart throbs!"

"Courage, my dear lady," replied Patty, in the same low tone; "courage, or you will betray us; I will speak to him; be you silent."

"What cheer, youngsters?" said Tom, "would you speak to me?"

"We would," replied Patty, in an assumed tone, "you belong to the Vanguard?"

"I do, and a gallant vessel she is, too," said Tom.

"We are two friendless lads," continued Patty, "who would fain serve their king and country."

"Whewgh!" whistled Tom, hitching up the waistband of his trowsers; "here's jolly tars—place them in petticoats, and they'd make two excellent lady's maids. Why, my lads, have you considered the danger of the enterprise? It's no use to fear when—"

"Fear, sir!" interrupted Patty, indignantly, "we are Englishmen, and never learn that word at school."

"Well said, youngsters," exclaimed Tom, "damme, he's got some mettle in him, though; give us your fin."

"Wh-wh-what, sir?"

"Wh-wh-what! oh, I forgot; you don't understand the king's English, yet. Give me your hand."

"Ah, to be sure I will," said Patty, extending her hand, which

Tom gave such a hearty pull, that he almost made the tears start into her eyes.

"What a hand for a sailor," observed Tom; "as soft as a kid glove. But I say, my lad, you'll splice the main brace, won't you?"

"Splice! splice!" stammered out the bewildered female.

"Oh, you don't know our nautical lingo, yet," replied Tom, "Drink, my lad, that's what I mean."

"To be sure," said Patty, taking the glass with much apparent glee. "Here's Admiral Nelson, the hero of the seas."

"Bravo! bravo!" shouted the sailors, drinking the toast.

"Won't yer companion drink?" asked Tom, pointing to Rosina.

"No, no, thank you," hastily returned Patty, with much confusion, "he—"

"Oh, perhaps he prefers pig-tail? Messmate, will you take a quid?" enquired Tom, handing the box to the bewildered maiden, who stammered out some sort of an excuse.

Patty then inquired whether they could not see the captain directly, and Tom having commissioned Dick Clewline to escort them to him, they departed. Shortly after this a signal gun was fired to summon the seamen on board, and the scene which then took place was one of the most pathetic description. The young men hugged their sweethearts to their bosoms with the most fervent affection, and many a manly cheek was damped with tears, as he stole a parting embrace of his wife and children.

"Now, my pretty Ellen," said Tom, turning to his sweetheart, "the time's come; we must part for awhile, lass; but, but damme, I'm not crying, no, no, Ellen."

"Oh, Tom," sobbed Ellen, "my heart sinks: I fear we shall meet no more."

"Avast! avast! my poor girl," returned her sweetheart, "we shall meet again, depend upon it. Ellen, this handkerchief is one that I have had ever since I was a little boy, no higher than half a handspike; when I am away, look on it, and do not forget your poor Tom."

Ellen pressed the handkerchief to her lips, and her tears flowed fast as she replied:

"This locket contains a miniature likeness of myself, will you wear it next your heart for my sake?"

"I will, I will," cried Tom in a broken tone; "and in the battle's heat, with that dear relic next my heart, defy the deadly ball that else may leave me low. But I must begone; see, the boat awaits, —Ellen! farewell! bless you! bless you!"

Tom pressed his lover to his heart, and kissed away the tears that flowed fast from her eyes. The poor girl's feelings overcame her, and ere the signal guns had been fired for the sailors to go on board, she fainted in his arms; and with one look of indescribable emotion, the brave fellow resigned her to the care of her parents, and pressed their hands, unable to utter a word, and beckoning to Richard, hurried away.

Bitter was the anguish felt by Mat Marlinspike, his wife and

daughter, for many days after the departure of Gallant Tom and their adopted son, Richard. The poor old dame, who loved the latter with as much affection as if he had been her own son, was with difficulty reconciled at all ; and her husband, who could not bear to witness her anguish, almost regretted having yielded to the predilection which the boy had for a nautical life.

"I cannot think upon the circumstances of that wretch, Saib, attempting the life of Richard," observed Mat's wife, an evening or two after the departure of the fleet ; "what motive could induce him to commit such a crime ? and in what way could the boy have injured him ?"

"Aye, aye, dame," observed Mat, "as you say, the conduct of that black swab was rather unaccountable ; but, depend upon it, he did not act without the instruction of some superior power."

"What ?" ejaculated his wife, with astonishment depicted on her countenance ; "do you mean to insinuate that—"

"Be cautious, dame," interrupted her husband, in a low tone, "for we might have listeners. What I meant to insinuate is, that the Earl Fitzosbert is one of the verriest scoundrels in existence, and—"

"That Saib acted only by his instructions," added his wife ; "is that what you mean ?"

"It is."

"But why should he seek the life of the boy ?" demanded the old woman.

"I know not," replied Mat, "only the fact of the matter is, that in my opinion Richard is no menial's offspring, and that the rascally black, and his equally rascally master, have discovered, by some means or other, his true origin, and for certain reasons best known to themselves, may have a wish to get rid of him."

"Goodness me !" exclaimed the old woman, "what ever could have put such an idea into your head ?"

"Hark you, dame," replied Mat, "I have before told you that the boy is no relation of mine, although till lately you supposed he was the son of my only, my favorite sister, who died some time since. As we are now alone, I will, upon your promise of secrecy. You will recollect that about thirteen years since, after returning from a long cruise, I had occasion to visit my sister, who at that time resided at the Isle of Wight ?"

"I recollect it perfectly well, Mat," answered his wife, "and I do not forget also, that I felt myself, at that time, rather offended at your remaining there so long."

"True," said Mat ; "and I don't wonder that you did, dame ; but you shall now, for the first time, hear the cause of it. You see, my sister lived near the coast, in a neat little cottage which she inherited from her late husband, who had saved a little money in the service of his country, and left her enough, with care, to live very comfortably. Well, one night, you must know, when the wind blew, and the rain pattered sharply against the casements of the cottage, I was seated in the parlor, smoking my pipe, and joking with my sister, to

keep up her spirits in the midst of the storm, when, suddenly, between the pauses of the blast, I thought I heard the cries of some person, as if in distress, outside. I listened, but all was again still, and I concluded that I had been deceived by the wind moaning among the cliffs, near which the cottage stood. But presently the sounds again broke more distinctly on my ears, and my sister became very much alarmed; for, you must know, that like many others of her sex, she could not lay claim to being over and above courageous. I started from my seat, and looked out of the casement, but the night was as dark as a funeral pall, and I could not see anything before me; but once more the low moans of some person vibrated on my ears. Determined to ascertain from whence they proceeded, I placed a light in a lantern that was upon the table, and laying hold of a stout cudgel, in case of danger, for there were some queerish characters, I knew at that time, in the neighborhood, I started forth to reconnoitre. I had scarcely got over the threshold of the door, when I stumbled over some object lying upon the ground, and holding down the lantern, what was my astonishment to behold stretched upon the earth the body of a man, bleeding profusely from a wound in the side, and apparently in the agonies of death, while nestling near him was an infant, who had evidently been roughly used, and was at that time quite insensible. I called to Margaret, and with her assistance, bore them into the cottage, and afterwards alarmed the neighbors, and procured the assistance of a doctor. The poor gentleman, however, never spoke, and in a short time after the arrival of the medical man, he breathed his last. The child was restored—that child is our little Richard!"

"Astonishing!" cried the dame; "but was it not discovered who the gentleman was, and who had been so guilty of the dreadful crime?"

"Never, dame, never," replied her husband; "every inquiry was made, but all to no purpose. A coroner's inquest was held upon the body, and they returned a verdict of 'wilful murder' against some person or persons unknown. He was a handsome, noble looking man, and his linen was marked with the initials 'A. F.', but that was the only clue given to who he was. It was a foul deed, and certain it is that some day or other, the base assassins will be discovered and brought to justice, and our *portege* restored to those rights I feel convinced some other person at present withholds from him. I made a vow to act as a father to the poor boy, until I could discover the secret of his birth, and I will not break my oath. Thinking that his life would not be safe if I did not keep the manner in which I became possessed of him a secret, I adopted the plan of placing him under the care of my sister, whose son I reported him to be. Now, dame, you know all about the matter, and I'm certain I need not impress upon your mind the necessity of silence, until Providence shall deem it fit to unravel the mystery of his birth, and bring the assassins of his father to punishment. But, come, this is a melancholy story, and I

must endeavor to shake off the effects of it; I must try a verse or two of my favorite old song:

“Merry is the sailor’s life,
Free from every care and strife,
With cheerful heart he’ll o’er the ocean go;
Let the billows foam and roar,
It only pleases Jack the more,
And damme, don’t he like to thrash the foe!
To every foreign clime he roam
He loves his ship just like his home,
With a yeo, yeo, yeo!

Drink, drink, and kiss the lasses,
Drink away, let’s be gay,
Fal de ral, de ral, lal lay!”

The Earl Fitzosbert paced his chamber with impatient steps on the night the villain Saib had, by his commands, hastened to the “Old Commodore,” to perpetrate the sanguinary deed.

“Yes,” he muttered to himself “my heart tells me that the suspicions of Saib are right, and that my brother’s hateful brat still exists in the person of the boy Richard. ’Tis strange that he should thus cross my path! But if Saib fail not, he will not remain long to annoy me. And yet,” he continued, after a pause, “why should I be so eager to have the boy’s life? He, probably, knows not that he is any other than the nephew of the man who brought him up, and what chance has he of ever discovering his real origin? Again, and is he not going to sea, and, exposed to all the vicissitudes of that life, may he not perish unknown? I do almost repent me of having sanctioned this dreadful crime. But what a weak, wayward fool I am getting; the deed once done, I am secure against all fear of discovery?”

Still was he doubtful and uneasy; and he longed, yet dreaded the return of his myrmidon, the ruffian Saib. Every sound that vibrated on his ears, made him start; and more than once he walked on the balcony before the window, and straining his eyes over the scenery beyond, endeavored to discover him approaching; but he came not: and at that late hour, for it was then midnight, all was still as death, save, at intervals, the wailing cry of the sea-mew, and the dashing of the waves. Another hour elapsed in this manner, and still the black came not, and the uneasiness of the earl increased to almost an insupportable degree.

“What can detain him?” he soliloquized; “surely he has failed in his attempt, and fallen into the hands of justice. I cannot bear to think of that. Should it be so, what can save me from disgrace and ignominy? Fool that I was, again to trust him, when he before was unsuccessful, or otherwise deceived me? But no, there is no fear of his accomplishing his inhuman purpose; the hand and fortune of my fair ward will urge him on to desperation. Methinks, however, he will find himself duped; the hand and wealth of the beauteous Rosina must not be so slightly sacrificed. I have other—but what noise is that?”

The sounds that had disturbed the earl seemed like the closing of the outer door, and he immediately started to the balcony, and looked over to endeavor to ascertain if anybody had entered or quitted the house. At first it was so dark that he could not perceive anything; but at last he just observed, but very indistinctly, apparently the forms of two men, who were running at a rapid rate along the high road which led from the house.

The earl was astonished at this circumstance; for who could have had occasion to leave his mansion at such an unreasonable hour of the night? Were they thieves? And if they were, how could they have gained an entrance to the house, without alarming the family; and more particularly, without his hearing them, when his attention was so ready to catch the slightest sound? Not at all satisfied, and knowing that his domestics had retired to rest, the earl took up the lamp that was burning in his chamber, and leaving the place, he descended the stairs with silent steps, often looking back, and pausing to listen, not from any fear of encountering danger, but,

“Conscience, which makes cowards of us all”

was at work within him; and particularly at that solemn hour, when all was so still and melancholy around him. In his progress, he two or three times suddenly paused and trembled, for he almost imagined he heard some one groaning, and then his blood would turn cold, and the perspiration would stand upon his temples. At length, ashamed of his weakness, he aroused himself, and holding the lamp above his head to facilitate his view, he proceeded to the hall, and examined all the doors. The front door was bolted, and perfectly secure; but his suspicions were confirmed when he found that a back door, which opened immediately upon a path that led round to the high road, was neither locked nor bolted.

Fearful that the house had been plundered, the earl was about to arouse his domestics, when a thought struck him, that probably the door had been left unfastened in a mistake, and he therefore determined to examine the rooms below. He first, however, returned to his chamber, and brought with him a brace of pistols to defend himself, in case there should be any persons in the mansion, and then made his way to the lower apartments, where everything seemed to remain in the same state as when those who had the care of them had left.

Satisfied that thieves had not been in the house, the earl re-ascended to his own room. It was now past three o'clock, and the day was beginning to break in at the windows; but Saib came not. The earl's uneasiness was most intolerable, and he formed a thousand vague conjectures as to the cause, which were rejected as soon as they occurred to him. At length, however, after racking his brain for nearly another hour, he concluded that his return might be noticed by some of the domestics and their suspicions aroused. Tired with thinking, Fitzsbert threw himself upon his couch, and sought to woo the drowsy god. He soon fell into a sound sleep, but it was

unrefreshing to him, for his imagination was disturbed by frightful visions, the nature of which may be easily imagined.

He woke not until the middle of the day, when he hastily arose, and ringing his bell, ordered the servant to attend, to desire Saib to come to him in his chamber immediately. The man went away to fulfill these orders, and quickly returned and informed his master that Saib was nowhere in the house, neither had he been seen by any one that morning. A chilling presentiment of something wrong darted through the mind of Fitzosbert on hearing this, and he abruptly ordered the man to quit the room, for fear he might notice his emotions: he arose from his couch in a state of anxiety which we will not attempt to describe, and descended to the breakfast room.

"Where is your lady, Miss Rosina?" inquired the earl, when he perceived that she was not in the apartment.

"I have not seen her this morning, my lord," replied the female attendant to whom he had addressed himself.

"Not seen her this morning!" reiterated Fitzosbert; "this is strange! send her waiting woman to me immediately."

The servant left the apartment to obey the order of her master, who arose from his chair, folded his arms, and traversed the room in the utmost state of agitation. In a few minutes the girl returned, and informed him that Patty was nowhere to be found, and that the chamber of Rosina was entirely deserted.

"Liar," cried the earl furiously, "it is a vile plot among the lot of ye, to distract my brain!" and pushing the servant rudely away from him, Fitzosbert hurriedly quitted the apartment, and rushed up the stairs towards the chamber of Rosina. There he found a confirmation of the servant's statements; the room was empty, and the bed had evidently never been entered the night before. Casting his eyes eagerly around the chamber, he observed on the table a note. He snatched it up; it was addressed to himself, and tearing it open, he read as follows:

"Your tyranny has driven me to this; I have followed the dictates of my own free will; expect not to see me again, until I shall no longer be subject to your power.

ROSINA."

Scarcely had the earl perused these lines, which convinced him that the two persons he had heard quit the mansion were Rosina and her attendant, when two or three of the men whom he had a short time before sent to make inquiries after Saib, returned and made him acquainted with what had transpired at the house of Mat Marlingspike, and the manner in which the ruffian Saib had been disposed of.

"Confusion!" cried the earl; "Rosina fled, my trusty Saib trepanned! There is some infernal spell upon me!"

CHAPTER II.

It was night, and Gallant Tom and several of his shipmates had gathered together in the fore peak, and were quaffing their grog as cheerful as possible. The sea was right in the *eyes* of the vessel, and the dashing of the waves against the bends on the outside, as it was divided by the keelson, had a melancholy, moaning sound. In a remote corner of the place, and apart from the rest of the men were seated Rosina and Patty. They both looked pale and fatigued; but there was an expression in the beautiful eyes of the former as they rested on the handsome and manly countenance of Tom, which plainly told how truly her heart was devoted to him, and how ready she was to suffer any inconvenience, to expose herself to any danger, to be near him, to gaze upon him, to hear the tones of his voice, and witness his generous and gallant conduct.

Many were the rude remarks to which the heroic girls had been subjected since they had been on board the vessel, and often was their secret near being betrayed. Sometimes the observations made by some of the men, conveyed to them an idea that their true characters were discovered; and at such times they would blush and tremble with such evident confusion, that it was a wonder they did not betray themselves. And then the arduous duties they had to perform, so opposite to their sex, were sufficient of themselves to make the strongest minds sink under it. But no; although often exhausted and ill, Rosina and her faithful attendant went to their hammocks, and bore up against it with a fortitude that was truly wonderful.

But, although Tom frequently joked with them on their delicacy and weakness, his remarks were never characterized by that coarseness which his shipmates indulged in; and when he saw them go awkwardly about anything, he would seem to take a pleasure in assisting them, and showing them the right way to do it.

Strange it was that a passion so ardent and sincere should engrraft itself in the heart of a female so differently circumstanced, and who might have had wealthy admirers at her feet, for the plain, simple, but honest tar. But love knows no distinction. When she thought about the terrible conflict in which they would soon be engaged, and that Tom might be one of those gallant fellows destined to fall, her heart sunk within her; and many a time she tossed restless about in her hammock—while the weary sailor slept soundly, regardless of the ocean's roar, she would offer up the most fervent prayers to Heaven for his preservation.

The ruffian, Saib, having promised to behave himself and do his duty, had been set at liberty in the ship soon after it had left Portsmouth; but he was watched narrowly, and with eyes of suspicion, by all the sailors, especially Gallant Tom, who carefully kept Richard from his clutches, fearful that the dark spirit which had before prompted him to seek his life, might lead him to perpetrate it now, in spite of the consequence that must follow.

But though the black promised to obey, it was evident he still nurtured the demon in his heart, and only wanted an opportunity to be revenged upon those who had been the cause of placing him in his present situation.

How Rosina shuddered whenever she encountered this hateful being, fearing that he would recognise her, even beneath the disguise she had assumed! Frequently, too, he had made a full stop when they had met upon deck, and fixed his large and ferocious eyes upon her countenance, as though he had some recollection of her features; and it was with difficulty she could find nerve sufficient to confront him, and prevent her betraying herself to him.

"Push about the grog, my hearties," observed Tom, as he quaffed off a stiff allowance with perfect ease: "this is what I call a snug party; and damme, I dare be bound to say a bolder set of lads are not to be found in the British fleet!"

"Well said, Tom," observed a rough-looking tar, with an immense quid crammed into his jaw, and swelling out his cheek as if he was troubled with a violent tooth-ache; "there's not a chicken-heart in this vessel, I think; if I thought there was, shiver my timbers, if I wouldn't make one to toss him overboard to the sharks!"

"Fear," said Tom, contemptuously; "who ever heard of such a thing in the British navy, I should like to know? Why, lor' bless yer, courage comes as natural to us as A B C. To be sure, we all feel a little strange and qualmish-like, when we first go out; and that's how it is with Joe Gordon (the name Rosina had assumed) and his cousin, I suppose. Though they are willing lads, they are much too tender and delicate for sailors. I have often thought, that if they were put into petticoats, they would make two capital milliners, or dressmakers. Here, my lads, drink; don't sit moping there like a tar upon six-water grog. If you will only place yourselves under my care, bless your souls, I shall make you quite accomplished in no time. You must bustle about when we attack the Mounseers, I can tell you; no skulking in the midst of battle; the French swabs do not turn tail easy. However, we are the chaps that can do it for them."

We need not attempt to describe the confusion of Rosina and Patty during this speech; and they could almost imagine they beheld the eyes of the sailors fixed upon them with suspicious scrutiny; and that Gallant Tom, from the insinuations he was constantly giving out, was perfectly aware of their real sex. However, Rosina, knowing that the eyes of all the sailors were watching her, aroused herself as much as possible, and, smiling upon Tom, she placed the grog to her lips, pretended to drink heartily, and afterwards remarked,—

"You are right, Tom; it is natural for a person to feel strange and timid on their first cruise, especially when he has before mingled in scenes very different, which me and my cousin Ben here have. But we shall wear the rust off in time, no doubt, only wait till we encounter the enemy, and you shall find that if we want to learn how to be sailors, we want no one to teach us how to fight."

"Bravo, Joe!" exclaimed Tom, giving the white and delicate hand of Rosina a hearty smack; "damme, you will turn out nothing but a good sort after all, I'll be bound. As for my portogee, little Dick, he is a perfect wonder in his way;—he takes it nat'r'l, to be sure, and in course that's quite another thing. Besides, now, I dare say, you have left some one that you love—nay, don't blush like a maid; there is no harm in owning one's feelings, when they are not wrong; and, I dare say, if you speak the truth, you will own there is one you love, and ——"

"Yes, there is indeed *one* that I love, even dearer than my own!" interrupted Rosina, energetically; "but that *one* is unconscious of the passion it has created."

"Oh, oh!" observed Tom, with a sly wink; "a little bit of secret bus'ness, eh? Now, splice my timbers, somehow or other, I do like to hear you talk: there is something so sweet in your voice, that—I was going to say, only you are a man,—reminds me of my pretty Ellen;—bless her heart, I'll be bound she is even now breathing a prayer to heaven for the safety of him, whom she knows loves her so dearly!"

"But the sailor is exposed to many temptations, Tom," said Rosina, timidly. "In foreign climes, fresh faces meet his gaze, and those he has loved may be obliterated from his heart in the contemplation of them. Even so, may you not forget your Ellen?"

"Forget my Ellen!—my pretty, kind, and faithful Ellen?" exclaimed Tom, indignantly; "damme, Joe, if it had been any one else that had dared to hint at such a thing, and I thought he meant it, I—I—but what a fool I am making of myself! Don't you see, youngster, I don't mind any subject but that; but if any lubber dare doubt my constancy to that dear girl, he must prove himself to be a better man than Tom Mainstay, or repent of his boldness. Hallo, Dick! what's the matter with you? Where have you been, and why do you stand there, holding out these signals?"

"Quick! follow me, cautiously, all of you, or in five minutes we shall be in eternity!" said the boy.

Struck by the earnestness of Richard's manner, Tom started upon his feet in a moment, and, followed by the rest of the sailors, obeyed the wishes of the boy, wondering what could be the meaning of his strange behavior. Richard hurried on, with noiseless steps, and led the way to the powder magazine, the door of which was open, and Tom, being the first, peeped in, and was thunderstruck, when he beheld the villain, Saib, brandishing a burning torch in his hand, and approaching a cask, the lid of which was knocked off. Tom caught the expression of the black fellow's eyes, and he could see they were bloodshot with rage and the terrible revenge he was about to take. A moment he stood over the cask, and then laughed with a fiendish malice.

"This moment decides all!" he cried. "The black man never is insulted without having ample revenge: they have dared to tear me from my home, and thus—thus do I ——"

"Hold! you infernal black swab," cried Gallant Tom, as he

rushed upon Saib, and, grasping him with Herculean strength by the throat, thwarted him in his demoniacal purpose. "For this, your black carcase shall dance a hornpipe upon nothing, for the amusement of the sea-gulls!"

The eyes of Saib rolled wildly and fiercely in their sockets, as Gallant Tom wrenched the torch from his hand, and the rest of the sailors secured him.

"Fiends of hell!" he cried, "seize upon he who has been the cause of thwarting me in my well-laid scheme of vengeance! But for this, and the black man would have immolated ye all in one scene of terrible destruction, and your dissevered limbs would have filled the air! Oh! curses light upon the wretch who has caused this!"

"Throw the black shark overboard immediately!" shouted a dozen voices.

"Aye, overboard with me, if ye like!" exclaimed Saib, "think not I tremble at death! no; I scorn, despise you all, and would willingly have sacrificed my own life could I have accomplished my revenge at the same time,—base, despicable, detested Christian reptiles!"

"Pluck out the black villain's tongue by the roots!" cried one of the sailors; "no tortures that we can inflict can be terrible enough to punish him for the fiendish crimes he would have committed."

"Avast! avast! messmates," observed Tom; "monster as he is, we must not take his punishment upon ourselves: he must be properly tried; and fear not but that he will meet with the fate he so richly merits. Away with him to confinement; and then let our officers know of the frightful charge we have against him."

"Ha! ha! ha!" laughed the wretch, scornfully: "do with me as you please; tear me limb from limb; cut the flesh from my bones by piecemeal; torture me any way that you can think of; and ye shall not hear a groan escape my lips. The black man mocks torment; he laughs at death; he is callous to pain;—my last wish will be a curse upon ye all. Now, then, bear me to your tortures! But," he continued, as he fixed a look of demoniacal hate upon Richard, "if I could only wreak my vengeance in the blood of that brat before I die—for he, I feel, has been the occasion of this,—I could meet my fate with exultation!"

"Drag him hence!" exclaimed Tom, "we will not listen to his unnatural ravings—away with him!"

The sailors gave a simultaneous shout as they dragged the monster away; and Gallant Tom, accompanied by Richard, who had been the fortunate means of saving the vessel and the whole crew from destruction, hastened to communicate the whole particulars to the officers. It would be impossible to describe the praise which was bestowed upon Richard for his intrepidity, which had saved the vessel and the lives of so many human beings from destruction, or the universal feeling of disgust and horror, which was excited against the villain Saib. No time was lost in bringing him to that punishment he had incurred, and his fate was quickly decided.

The next morning all hands were piped upon deck, and the wretch

Saib was brought forth heavily fettered, to receive his sentence. He stood unmoved; his large eyes gleaming fiercely, alternately upon the officers and those men who had detected him in his diabolical attempt.

"Haul up the old shattered long-boat," said the captain.

The boat was lugged on to the deck of the vessel in a moment, and every eye was fixed upon the captain in painful suspense. He paused for a second or two, and turned and spoke in an undertone to the officers, who bowed their heads as if assenting to what he said.

"Bind the villain hand and foot in the boat!" exclaimed the captain, "and commit him to the mercy of the waves: thus do we punish the miscreant, who would have sacrificed the lives of so many of his fellow creatures."

There was a slight murmur of satisfaction from part of the crew on this sentence being pronounced; but it was quickly stifled in the solemnity of the moment, and the awfulness of the punishment they were about to inflict upon the hardened wretch. But a smile of contempt passed over his features when he heard it, and he resigned himself to the hands of the sailors without a word. Another minute and he was securely bound in the boat, and then another pause ensued, and the sailors looked earnestly at their officers, as if uncertain, and hesitating how they should act.

"Overboard with him!" cried the captain, "and the Lord have mercy on his soul."

A death-like silence followed: the boat, containing the unhappy wretch, was dragged to the side of the vessel and let down with ropes. A second only, and there was heard a loud splashing in the water; and, directly afterwards, (a strong gale of wind blowing at the time) the boat was seen dashing on amidst the rolling billows, with the most impetuous fury, until it became a speck, and was seen no more. At this juncture, a piercing shriek was heard, which made every person present start, and look around them with astonishment.

"What noise was that?" demanded the captain, hastily.

No one answered; and the sailors seemed to be looking upon each other with mute astonishment. That shriek was uttered by Rosina, who, after the appalling sight she had just witnessed, was so much overcome, that it was a matter of astonishment she did not betray herself. Fortunately, Patty, who did not lose her self-possession, was by her side at the time, and, before they could be observed, hurried her from the deck.

CHAPTER III.

THE BATTLE OF THE NILE.

It was on the 1st of August, 1789, that the Vanguard discovered the French fleet at anchor in the bay of Aboukir, in the line of battle,

which was instantly communicated by signal, with their numbers. All was bustle and eagerness immediately among the British, and none displayed more anxiety for the contest than Gallant Tom. He breathed a prayer for a blessing on his dear Ellen, kissed her miniature, and then hastened to give instructions to little Richard. But how shall we attempt to describe the situation of Rosina and Patty? Much as the former dreaded and shuddered at the scene of carnage and bloodshed, of which she was shortly to witness and to mingle in, her principal anxiety was for him for whom she had ventured so much. Many were the prayers she breathed to heaven to protect him in the deadly strife, or that if it had destined that he should fall, she might not be suffered to survive him.

At sunset, which was at thirty-one minutes past six, the deadly engagement commenced, with an ardor and vigor that British seamen had never before surpassed: soon it raged fiercely, and nothing could be heard but the tremendous roar of the cannon, the shouts of the sailors, and the groans of the dying. On both sides they fought bravely, and the slaughter was dreadful.

But where were the two adventurous females during this awful scene? They were compelled to keep their post; and every moment they expected would bring them the herald of death.

As well as her eyes could penetrate through the dense smoke, poor Rosina watched the object of her affection; and one moment her heart sunk with horror as she beheld him exposed to the most imminent danger, and expected to see him stretched a bleeding corpse on the deck; while the next, it swelled with gratitude and hope, as she beheld him released from his perilous position, and, apparently, sheltered from harm.

Suddenly there was a hollow cry on board the ship to which our hero belonged, and which quickly passed through the whole fleet, that the French admiral's ship was on fire; and soon the flames were seen to issue from the after-part of the cabin, with such rapidity that the whole after-part of the ship was soon involved in flames. About ten o'clock, *L'Orient* blew up with a terrible explosion. It was a dreadful sight. An awful pause, and death-like silence for about three minutes ensued, when the masts, yards, &c. which had been carried to a vast height, fell down into the water and on board the surrounding ships. Just at this dreadful moment, a loud scream sounded in Tom's ears, and, turning suddenly round, Rosina fell bleeding into his arms. She had been struck on the head by a portion of one of the masts of the unfortunate *L'Orient*, and had become completely insensible, and apparently dying.

Anxious to know to what extent the supposed youth was injured, (for he had become attached to him since he had been on board) Tom bore the insensible Rosina to a place of security, and raising her in his arms, unbuttoned the collar of the shirt he wore, to give him air; but who shall attempt to describe his astonishment and emotion, when he discovered the beautiful alabaster skin, and gracefully moulded neck of a female? He could scarcely credit the evidence of his senses. Again he looked: he parted the hair from her

temples, and he was then not only convinced that it was a woman, but one of the loveliest creatures he had ever seen before.

"Poor girl! poor girl!" said the honest tar, as he gazed on her pallid features, and re-arranging her dress, "what can have tempted you to this? Some love affair, I'll venture my life. Well, well, God send that your magnanimity may be rewarded as it deserves; but, much I fear, that you are summoned up aloft. Well might I say that she looked as delicate as a dressmaker, poor lass; but little did I suspect this. How lovely she looks, although so pale—almost as pretty as my Ellen! But, shiver my topsails, while I am thus talking, she is probably dying; let me hasten to get her assistance."

With these words, Tom threw the senseless maiden over his shoulder, and made the best of his way to the surgeon, under whose care he placed her, after having informed him of the singular discovery he had made. The news of this romantic adventure had spread like lightning through the fleet; and the general astonishment was not a little increased, when her companion was also discovered to be of the same sex. The blow which Rosina had received was not dangerous, and had nearly stunned her; with the skilful treatment of the medical man, she was soon recovered, and found her maid, Patty, attending upon her; and her surprise and confusion may be easily imagined, when she was informed their sex was known, and that the discovery had been made by him, to be near whom, she had assumed the disguise she did.

"Good God! what shall I do? What can I say in excuse for this strange behavior?" she ejaculated, when her and Patty were alone. "My real name and rank must be discovered; and what will be the suspicions they will entertain of my conduct? What will he, too, think? Should he by any chance ascertain the motives that have stimulated me to this rash—this foolish act—will he not despise, detest, upbraid me, for seeking to obtain that heart which is already in the possession of another? Yes, yes, he will—he must—I feel he must."

"Oh, no, Miss," ejaculated Patty; "you wrong the young man by such a thought; I know you do—he has too noble, too generous a mind, to do as you say: he may pity, but can never hate or despise you."

"Alas!" returned Rosina, weeping, "how poor a reward will pity be for one who loves him with the fervor that I do—methinks I could rather endure his scorn. But, since it has come to this, I will no longer keep my unfortunate passion a secret locked within my own breast. No; to him I will impart the truth, unravel all my thoughts, and, having thus disburthened my mind, and thrown myself upon his generosity, what more will then be left me than to die?"

"Oh, my dear lady!" exclaimed Patty, "do not talk so—it grieves me to hear you. Let us hope for the best, and happiness may yet be yours."

Rosina shook her head.

"Happiness!" she repeated; "oh! no, no, no; happiness will ne'er again be mine. Indeed, I have known but little from my

childhood ; and, since the loss of my poor brother, my path has been one of thorns. 'There will be no peace for me but in the grave.'

"Lor' Miss," observed Patty, "how you do talk ! why, it is enough to make a person melancholy to hear you. But do not give way to despair, for there is no knowing what Providence has in store for you, and ——"

"Nay, my poor girl," interrupted her mistress, "do not deceive yourself, nor think to deceive me ; I know the goodness of your motives ; but with me they must fail in having the effect you wish they should. However, I will no longer act the hypocrite ; no—the object of my affection shall be made acquainted with the passion he has excited, let whatever may be the result."

The glorious battle was now over, and the immortal Nelson and his gallant men added largely to the laurels already upon their brows. Tom, who felt a deep interest in the female, whom he had a second time rescued from death, for he soon became acquainted with her real rank and name, took the liberty of requesting an interview with her. Rosina complied with his desire immediately.

He found her seated alone in her cabin, and her face, which was very pale when he first entered, became suffused with blushes, as he looked compassionately upon her, and, in a tone of more than usual gentleness, inquired after her health.

Rosina shook her head, sighed, and replied,—“that she was as well as she could be expected ;” and, after having expressed her thanks to him for his kindness to her while she had been on board, she became silent, and her feelings were evidently undergoing a severe trial. Several times she looked at Tom, and tears trembled in her eyes : she tried to speak, but the words died away in her throat ; she turned away her head, and hid her face in her handkerchief.

Tom felt embarrassed and confused at this strange behavior, and fearing that his longer intrusion might be considered impertinent, he expressed his pleasure at finding that she was getting better, and was about to leave the place, when Rosina, aroused by his actions, rushed suddenly forward, with convulsive emotion, and throwing herself at his feet, clasped his knees, and exclaimed—

“Do not leave me thus !—nay, you shall not go, until I have made you acquainted with my weakness, and revealed to you the unhappy wretch my headstrong and ungovernable passion has rendered me !”

The honest tar was completely thunderstruck : he could scarcely believe that he was awake. Then he thought that Rosina was suffering under the effects of madness from the blow she had received. The earnestness of her manner deeply affected him ; and, raising her from her knees, he led her towards a chair, and retiring respectfully to a short distance, he begged her to inform him in what manner he could assist her.

“Nay,” exclaimed the distracted damsel, “do not look so coolly upon me ! I know I have done wrong to encourage this unhappy

passion, when I knew that your heart was engaged to another ; but still let me not hear that you hate me, and I will endeavor to be content. If you really love the fair maiden you have left behind, you can feel for me, and will know how powerful, how irresistible, is a sincere affection."

Tom looked confused and incredulous : he twisted his hat in his hand, held down his head, blushed like a maid, and scarcely knew what to say. As for Rosina, she appeared to be more composed, and perfectly prepared to hear his answer. She had divulged the secret which she had so long (with the exception of Patty) confined to her own bosom : she had inspired that passion, and she felt as if a heavy burthen had been removed from her heart. She looked at Tom, and perceiving his embarrassment, fixed upon him a glance of the deepest affection, and said,—

" Think not wrong of me for making this disclosure, or that I have overstepped the bounds of female modesty by so doing. Alas ! love, such as I feel, admits of no such restrictions as would bind the tongue. Yes, I repeat, I love you ; that for your sake I assumed this disguise ; to be near you, I braved all the perils of the ocean, the terrors of the battle ; and, even now, would I willingly make any sacrifice, could I obtain a return of the affection I entertain for you ; but no—it must not be ; your heart is already engaged, and I do the poor girl wrong by— Oh, Tom, for by that familiar name I must for once be permitted to call you, from the moment I was saved from an untimely death by your bravery, my heart has throbbed towards you ; but it is no common passion that has moved it ; it is a mysterious, an indescribable love, which but increases in strength the more I attempt to vanquish it."

" I ask pardon, Miss," said the honest, plain-spoken tar, who still continued to twirl his hat upon his thumb ; " yer see, th' fact o' the matter is this—I—I—I mean to say, that I am not much used to fine palaver, and, therefore, cannot make you such a reply as I ought. You do me great honor by th' good opinion you are pleased to have of me, and I am sorry you should have been put to such an inconvenience in consequence ; as for loving me, why, you know, Miss, the difference of our stations would forbid me to encourage any idea of returning it, even if my pretty Ellen did not present a still greater obstacle. I am only a poor sailor, with no other fortune than a strong arm, a willing heart, and a clear conscience ; while you, a lady, and —"

" Oh, what is rank—what is fortune ?" ejaculated Rosina, fervently ; " I value them not. But, enough of this ; I have relieved my mind, and I appeal to your honor not to betray the confidence I have reposed in you."

" Betray you, Miss !" cried Tom, emphatically ; " never !—I would suffer myself to be hauled up to the yard-arm first. Nay, more, Miss, if the friendship, the esteem, of a humble being like me, should be considered of any value by you, rest assured that they are yours—indeed, that I will love you as a brother."

" A brother !" reiterated Rosina, and tears filled her eyes. " Ah

I had a brother once—a kind, a gentle brother,—I lost him in his childhood !”

“ Did he then die, Miss ?” inquired Tom, whose interest and curiosity were excited.

“ No, he did not,” answered Rosina ; “ he disappeared in a most mysterious manner, and I have heard no tidings of him since.”

“ And how long, say you, is it since this occurred ?” inquired Tom, eagerly.

“ As near as I can recollect, it is about eighteen years since,” answered Rosina ; “ but I can recall the features of my poor brother as clearly to my memory as if I had gazed on them but yesterday. It was the strong likeness which you bear to that lost brother, which first drew my heart towards you, and ——”

“ This is strange !” interrupted Tom. “ I was stolen from my home, when a boy, by gipsies, from whom I afterwards escaped ; and, having lost all clue of my friends, I entered on board a ship, and have been ploughing the waves ever since.”

“ But had you a sister ?” demanded Rosina, breathlessly.

“ I had,” answered Tom : “ I can well remember her ; she was a pretty blue-eyed girl, like a little fairy, of whom I was fond, and used to take such pride in gathering for her all the fancy shells and pebbles on the sea-beach. Many a time has that sweet child haunted my imagination, and ——”

“ Was your father living when you were stolen away ?” asked Rosina, as a strange, indefinite feeling came over her.

“ He was : a fisherman was his calling ; and, though it becomes me not to speak ill of him that gave me being, he was a morose, harsh, and cruel man, that neither me nor my sister could love him.”

“ His name ?—quick ! quick ! for Heaven’s sake !” gasped forth Rosina.

“ Will Brandon !” replied the astonished Tom.

Rosina uttered a scream of astonishment and joy, and threw herself into the arms of Tom.

“ Merciful God !” she exclaimed, “ Thy ways are wonderful ! My brother !—my long lost brother !”

It would be utterly impossible to describe the astonishment and agitation of Tom, as he held the beauteous Rosina to his bosom, she having fainted, and remembered the words she had uttered. He parted the silken locks from her pale temples, gazed steadfastly upon her countenance, and scrutinized minutely its every lineament ; and, as he did so, he felt as it were his heart bound towards her, and he was convinced that they were nearly related as she had mentioned. His emotion became excessive : he sought to arouse her to sensibility—called her sister, and pressed his lips upon her cheek with all the fervor of brotherly love.

“ Yes, it must be so !” he cried, as he gazed upon the pale countenance of the insensible maiden : “ my heart tells me that the poorlass has spoken correctly, and that she is the same dear sister with whom I have so often frolicked in childhood, and whose innocent

smile I can never forget. Ah! there is the same fairy locks, the beautiful mild blue eyes, the—the—oh, shiver me! I am so overjoyed I don't know what to do with myself. SISTER! Damme, I could repeat the name a thousand times, I am so fond of it. And then to think that the dear girl should feel such an instinctive affection for me, and to expose herself to so many dangers to be near me, while I was so blind and silly that I did not know her—it seems to be impossible! My eyes! here will be a tale to tell old Mat and my pretty little Ellen!—that—that—I have got a sister!—that I am rich;—and that—splice my timbers! if my Nell shan't ride in her carriage, and have servants to wait upon her!"

Here the honest tar was so overcome by the power of his feelings, that, in spite of all his manly efforts to the contrary, he could not help weeping upon the pallid cheek of his newly discovered sister.

"But, what a fool I am to stay here, with my pumps at work, and she is, perhaps, dying!" he suddenly ejaculated, dashing the tears from his eyes, raising her in his arms, and putting his ear to her lips, to ascertain whether or not the dear object of his care and anxiety still breathed. "Poor girl! I do think it would break my heart if you were to be taken from me, just as you have discovered that you have a brother living to protect and love you. The more I look upon her countenance, the stronger my heart warms towards her, and methinks I see *sister* stamped upon every feature. Dear, dear, girl! But, avast! this will not do; I am ashamed of myself; I shall become a child again in a few moments if I do not put a stop to it."

As Gallant Tom gave utterance to these words, he placed the insensible form of Rosina carefully over his shoulder, and bore her hastily into a cabin, where he placed her under the care of a female and the doctor; but would not leave her until he was satisfied that there was no fear of her recovery, and that her feelings, being overcome by the sudden surprise, had caused her merely to swoon. Tom then pressed two or three more ardent kisses on her lips, and departed to his duty.

Tom had scarcely got upon deck, when he was startled by loud cries, and upon inquiring the cause, he was horror-struck to hear that the boy, Richard, had that moment accidentally fallen overboard, and had disappeared beneath the waves. Like a madman, Tom rushed forward, and inquired the spot where his *protege* had fallen; but, ere the answer could be given, he saw him rise upon the crest of one of the billows, and, without waiting an instant for consideration, the heroic tar sprang overboard; and, catching hold of the jacket of the boy, almost immediately afterwards sunk with him under the waves.

The persons who had watched the action of the intrepid Tom, which was all the work of a moment, and done before they had time to render any assistance, which they might otherwise have done, were in a state of most dreadful suspense, fearful that he would perish in his brave attempt to save the life of Richard; but, ere they could take any steps to rescue them, Tom was seen to rise again on

the waves, with the senseless body of the boy held firmly under his arm, while, with the other hand, he made a desperate effort to reach the boat, which had been lowered.

It was a narrow escape : another moment, and the gallant fellow must have sunk exhausted, when the boat fortunately drifted towards him ; he caught hold of it by the gunnel, and succeeded in getting into it with the boy. The sailors set up a loud shout of joy when they beheld their esteemed messmate in safety, and immediately assisted them both upon deck.

Rosina had regained her senses, and acquainted Patty with the wonderful discovery she had made, whose astonishment, as may be naturally expected, exceeded all bounds. She, however, was strictly enjoined by her mistress to keep it a profound secret, until she and Tom had consulted what was the best plan to adopt.

Tom sought the earliest opportunity of seeing Rosina again, and their meeting was of the most affectionate description. If anything had been wanting to confirm the truth of Tom's being the brother of Rosina, two peculiar marks on his left wrist did away every doubt ;—beside, the name of the man who had brought them up, the place where they had lived, and the different scenes which they had been in the habit of rambling to, and which Tom perfectly well recollects, did away with all possible suspicion.

Rosina related all that had happened to her since Tom's abduction, to which he listened with the utmost surprise, more especially when he learned that Will Brandon was not their father, and that their real parent was wealthy and noble. But his heart throbbed with indignation when she recounted to him the conduct of the Earl Fitzosbert towards her, and the presumptuous insolence of the wretch Saib.

“ The infernal shark ! ” exclaimed Tom, his eyes sparkling with rage ; “ let me but reach Plymouth again, and I will pull his house about his ears,—to dare to insult and ill-treat a woman ! and that woman my sister, too ! —O, damme, if I would not make mincemeat of his proud carcase ! ”

Rosina beheld with love and admiration the honest energy of her long-lost brother ; and as she hung upon his neck and looked into his features, all the happy days of childhood rushed into sunny vividness upon her memory, and she wept ; but they were tears of joy she shed.

To prevent the excitement that such an event would cause on board, and likewise the more securely to forward their designs as regarded the Earl, it was determined between Tom and Rosina, that they should keep the discovery they had made a secret, till they had got on shore.

So singular were the events of the last few days, that Tom could scarcely persuade himself that it was not a dream. His heart was overflowing with gratitude to Omnipotence for the restoration of his sister ; and if the idea of the alteration there would be in his circumstances made an impression on his mind, it was to fill him with delight, to think that he should be able to make his Ellen not only happy, but rich.

“ Yes !” cried the gallant sailor, as he pressed the likeness of his sweetheart to his lips, “ if I were to become a prince, no other but you, my pretty Ellen, should become my bride. What care I for wealth, were it not to make you happy ?”

CHAPTER IV.

ASHORE.

It was a beautiful evening : a refreshing breeze was wafted from the bosom of the deep blue ocean, and the crimson glow of the setting sun caught the white spray, and gave it the appearance of molten gold. Many a gallant vessel was floating in the port ; and from their lofty mast-heads their signals waved proudly and triumphantly in the air.

The town of Plymouth presented an unusual scene of gaiety : people were moving to and fro, attired in their best clothes, and all the different public-houses were full of sailors, old and young : the fiddle was going merrily in many of them—while in others might be observed groups of old sailors, and anxious females listening to one who was reading from the *Gazette*, the account of the battle of the Nile. At the end of every sentence, the pride and delight of all present demonstrated itself in the most enthusiastic shouts ; the females looked sadly on ; mothers wept at the uncertainty of the fate of their sons, and young women trembled when they reflected that probably those they loved were among the slain.

“ The Old Commodore ” public-house was more than usually thronged, and Mat Marlinspike and his dame had enough to do to wait upon their numerous guests. As for Ellen, she was too deeply affected, and her heart was too heavy to suffer her to take any part in the business ; and she listened to the account of the engagement with feelings of terror and apprehension. When the gray-headed old veteran, who was reading the paper, came to the “ *Vanguard*,” and the number of the killed and wounded, she turned ghastly pale, and was obliged to lean for support against the porch.

“ Come, come, Ellen,” said her father, “ don’t be down-hearted ; your lover may be safe enough after all ; and if not, he has met the death of a brave fellow, as many one has done before him.”

“ Oh, my dear father !” exclaimed Ellen, shuddering, “ for Heaven’s sake, do not mention that dreadful probability ; it smites my heart with horror. If Tom is slain, my happiness will be at an end, and death would be a mercy to me.”

“ Do not despair, my dear girl ; there are many chances and mischances for a man at sea,” observed her father : “ perhaps he may have been sent aloft—perhaps he is quite well—and mayhap he is wounded. I say, Nell, what would you say if your lover was to come back to you with a timber toe, one eye, or an iron hook instead of a hand ?”

"Heaven preserve him from any such calamity!" exclaimed the damsel, fervently; "but if he should come back maimed and disfigured as you have described, think you it would alter my sentiments towards him? Oh, no, no! although he might be frightful to look upon, in my eyes he would be all that he ever was—the same kind, the affectionate, the brave, the constant Tom;—nay, if it be possible, I would love him still more ardently for his misfortunes."

"Well spoken, Nell,—well spoken, my lass," said her father: "God send that your best wishes may be realized, for you are an honor to your sex, and every way worthy of becoming the happy wife of such a brave fellow as Gallant Tom. Richard too—I wonder if he is safe? Oh, how anxious am I to see them both again! See, yonder goes the Earl Fitzosbert, looking as moody as usual. Since he has lost his worthy confidant, that black rascal Saib, and the strange disappearance of his ward, Miss Rosina, together with her servant, Patty, he has become more stern than ever, and he looks upon everybody with an eye of suspicion, and seems if he could willingly cut all our throats. Well, let him enjoy his whim; there is no love lost, I reckon.—Coming, messmates."

With these words, Mat hustled into the house to attend upon his customers.

The Earl Fitzosbert stood for a few moments at some distance, with folded arms, and gazed upon the group. His brows were contracted, and the contemptuous curl of his lip showed the dark thoughts that pervaded his mind. He frowned, and walked slowly on in the direction of his house, with his eyes bent upon the ground, and seeming completely absorbed in his gloomy meditations.

Vain had been all the endeavors of the Earl to learn what had become of Rosina and her maid; and, after instituting inquiries for several months, and offering a large reward to any one who could give him any information upon the subject, he at length gave it up in despair. The account of the engagement brought the business more immediately to his mind. He wondered if Saib still lived, and if he would return to England; if he did, then would hope once more revive in his bosom, for he knew that the zeal of his faithful myrmidon would never rest until he had discovered the retreat of Rosina, and placed her once more within their power.

It was about a month after the news of the battle of the Nile had reached England, that the Earl was seated in his study, when the door was suddenly thrown open; and his astonishment may be readily imagined, when Saib, in a sailor's dress, stood before him!

The Earl started, and could scarcely believe the evidence of his senses, while Saib folded his arms, and stood gazing upon his master's demonstrations of astonishment in solemn silence.

"Is it possible! and do I again behold my faithful Saib? or is it only some delusive vision?"

"It is no vision, Earl," answered the black, "but the same Saib to whom you are so much indebted."

"Indebted!" repeated the Earl, with a shudder, as the dark deeds

of the past arose upon his recollection, and he could not help feeling a momentary sentiment of disgust at the wretch who could thus make a boast of his iniquities; but he stifled the feeling as well as he could, and soon forgot everything in the surprise he experienced at the unexpected reappearance of his faithful myrmidon.

"This, indeed, affords me pleasure," said the Earl: "welcome once more to England. I much need your aid and counsel. But, tell me, whither have you been?"

"I have a tale of wrongs to tell you," said Saib, "which will make your blood boil with rage to listen to; but the injuries that have been done me shall be amply avenged. Yes, now I once more tread this shore, nothing shall foil me in my designs. Let the Christian reptiles tremble! they have aroused a spirit that will not rest until it has heaped destruction upon them all. I suppose you heard how I was trepanned on the night when I sought to rid you of that hated obstacle to your peace?"

"I did," answered the Earl.

"And yet you sought not to avenge the deed!"

"On whom was my revenge to fall, when those who had done the wrong were far away?" demanded the Earl.

"True; but the black man's wrath would have led him to have wreaked his revenge upon all those who had in any way been connected with the objects of his hate; and it shall do so yet, or may my arm wither from my body!"

The villain related the manner in which he had been frustrated in his diabolical attempt on the life of Richard, and afterwards forced on board "The Vanguard."

"I cannot describe to you sufficiently the passions of deadly malice and hatred that inhabited my breast ever afterwards," resumed Saib. "I exhausted all my execrations in breathing curses upon the heads of those who had been the means of placing me in such a situation, and was determined that I would have a dreadful and sanguinary satisfaction. But I was forced to dissemble, or I should have been kept in irons, and totally deprived of all power to put my wishes into execution. I therefore pretended to compunction, promised obedience to the rules of the vessel, and expressed contrition for what I had been guilty of. Need I tell you how this tortured me? I could endure no greater punishment than even to show the semblance of repentance toward those whom I only longed for an opportunity to sacrifice to my vengeance. But it had the desired effect; the officers were deceived; I was released from my fetters, and permitted to take my seaman's station in the ship. No sooner did I thus find myself at liberty, than my heart yearned to put my plans into execution. I watched my opportunity with the same vigilance as the Minerali does for his booty. But an infernal spell seemed to be upon me, and something always occurred at the very moment I was on the point of gratifying my wishes; to render my stratagem abortive.

"The repeated disappointments drove me to madness and a state of ungovernable fury; and at last I determined, by one desperate

effort, to immolate, not only those whom I had cause to detest, but myself and the whole crew. To be brief, I resolved to set fire in the powder magazine, and blow the whole of them into the air."

Even the Earl could not help shuddering at this recital ; and he unconsciously admired the interposition of Providence, by which means it had been saved in so miraculous a manner.

Saib continued—

" The wretches bound me hand and foot in their shattered boat, and consigned me to the mercy of the waves. Death seemed inevitable ; for, even if the boat should be able to battle the fury of the ocean, I must die of hunger. Had my limbs been free, I should at once have ended my tortures by plunging into the sea, and I wished that every wave would swallow me up. With the apparent nearer approach of death, my strength appeared to increase, and, after innumerable efforts, I succeeded in getting my arms at liberty. Of course, it was not long before I released myself from the ropes altogether : I stood upright in the boat, and looked sternly around me upon the dark blue waves. I was about to take the fatal leap, when a sudden thought darted across my brain, and arrested my purpose. A voice seemed to whisper in my ear that there was yet hope, and that I might still live for vengeance on the objects of my detestation. I resolved to make a violent struggle to save myself. But how ? Exposed in an open, crazy boat, with nothing but the ocean and the sky to be seen, and without any knowledge whither the impetuous billows were driving me ! For six hours was I tossed about in this manner, expecting every moment would be my last ; at length the crazy vessel was swamped, and I found myself immersed in the ocean. I rose again upon the waves, and struggled hard for life. I saw a rock at no great distance from me, to which I endeavored to make my way. After some difficulty I succeeded in my design, and, weak and exhausted, clambered up the craggy side of the rock, until I reached its lofty summit. I gazed around me, and the scene presented nothing but despair to my eyes. The rock was entirely barren. Here, then, must I remain to starve ; but still the hope of future revenge sustained me. I crouched down in the hollow of the rock, and, completely worn out with fatigue, fell into a sleep.

" The next day, hunger was so intense upon me, that I gnawed the flesh from my arm. Suddenly my eyes rested upon the white sails of a vessel at no considerable distance, and which seemed to be approaching in the direction of the rock on which I stood. In a delirium of joy at the hope of deliverance, I tore the shirt from my back, and, waving it over my head, shouted till I felt the blood rushing to my head with the exertion. The ship approached quickly : at length they gave a signal they saw me, and a short time afterwards they put off a boat with three men in it to my assistance. I could scarcely wait till the boat reached the rock, and was almost tempted to plunge into the water to swim to it. At length it reached me : I was released and conveyed safely on board. It turned out to be a Spanish vessel. I told that I had sailed in a trading vessel,

which had been attacked by a pirate, who destroyed the captain and all the crew and passengers, I only escaping my fate by precipitating myself into the sea. The captain received me kindly, and conveyed me to the port to which he was bound, where, after enduring the most dreadful privations, I contrived to get on board a vessel bound to Newland, in which I arrived but yesterday. Now tell me, Earl Fitzosbert, has not your *slave* endured enough in his endeavors to serve his master?"

When Saib had thus concluded his narrative, the Earl remained silent for a few minutes, and appeared to be wrapped in deep rumination; while the former folded his arms and traversed the apartment, brooding over the facts he had first recited, and contemplating the means of gratifying his revenge. At length the Earl broke the silence, and said,—"Saib, you have indeed done much, for which I hope you will receive ample satisfaction; nor have I been without my share of trouble since you have been away. Rosina —"

"Ah! what of her?" interrupted the black, eagerly. "Speak—tell me!"

"Immediately after you were taken away, I missed Rosina and her maid Patty; and from that time, although my search has been most vigorous, I have not seen or heard anything of her."

"Damnation!" exclaimed the enraged black, his eyes rolling fiercely in their sockets, and his broad chest heaving with the intensity of his feelings: "Rosina fled! my hopes crushed! Hark you, Earl Fitzosbert, do not attempt to deceive me, for you know how much you have cause to dread me, and how little I care about risking my own life to be avenged on those who do me wrong. This is a stratagem of your own to avoid the fulfilment of the promise you made and swore to me. You know where the girl is situated!"

"By heaven, I do not; but, even if Rosina was still in my power, you have not yet fulfilled your compact, and consequently have no claim upon her."

"Indeed! so this is your gratitude for all the risks I have run! Well, well, I ought to have expected it; but beware! seek not to tamper with me, or, by all the powers of evil, you shall repent it!"

"Oh! dare you threaten?"

"Dare I threaten?" repeated the black, with a contemptuous smile; "aye, and perform too! Do you know, Earl Fitzosbert, that one word from me would level all your present wealth and power with the dust, and place you—yes, you—upon the scaffold? Seek not to exasperate me, for, when I am once aroused, it is no easy matter to appease my wrath."

"Nay, my good Saib," said the Earl, shuddering at his threats, and truckling with all the weakness of a child, "this is madness: we should not quarrel, who —"

"You know where the girl is concealed!"

"I swear to you, Saib,—solemnly swear,—that I do not!"

"This is strange!" muttered the black, biting his lips, and pacing the room with hurried steps; "but her fortune?"

"Is still in my power," replied the Earl.

" 'Tis well," said Saib, with a look of exultation: "at any rate, if the flight of the girl prevents your fulfilling one part of your agreement, the possession of her property enables you to perform the other."

" Her money is not at my disposal!" exclaimed the Earl.

" Pshaw!" cried the black, " you were not wont to be so nice about trifles!"

" We will talk more of this anon, Saib," said Fitzosbert; " at present, we must devote our whole attention towards the discovery of the retreat of the fugitive; and, now that I have the aid of your sagacity, I entertain a hope that we shall yet be successful."

" Well, be it so," said Saib; " but say, have our foes returned to England yet?"

" They have not; but are expected every day," answered the Earl.

" If those I hate have survived the bloody carnage," ejaculated Saib, " I will not rest until I have had a death revenge for what I have suffered!"

" And what of the boy Richard, as they call him?" asked the Earl.

" He shall not escape," returned the black: " the brat has become my bane, my spell, my curse. Did he not thwart me in my scheme of vengeance?"

" True; but is that your only motive for wishing to dispatch him?"

" Why do you ask the question, when you know it is not?" returned Saib. " Do you wish to retain the estates of Fitzosbert?"

" But do you still think that this boy is ——"

" Your brother's son, Julian, the right heir to the proud earldom and estates of Fitzosbert. Oft have I watched his countenance narrowly, and traced every lineament of his father's features, and almost fancied I could see the eyes of the murdered man beaming with an expression of reproach through his."

We will now leave the black, and return once more to the honest inhabitants of " The Old Commodore."

At length the joyful news arrived, that such of the vessels as had returned after the engagement, had reached Portsmouth; and there were many anxious hearts in Plymouth on that occasion, and many hopes, and doubts, and fears, lest those dear to them should not be among those who had survived the battle.

" Cheer up, my lass, cheer up," said old Mat to his daughter; " I feel confident that those we love are quite safe."

" Heaven grant that it may be so!" ejaculated the dame.

Ellen responded to the prayer.

All that night Ellen slept but little; and when she did, dreams of the most perplexing description haunted her imagination. She arose at an early hour, and walked down to the sea-beach. Her eyes watched with great interest the noble vessels in the port, and her thoughts were wholly occupied with the image of her lover. She

was suddenly aroused from thought by the sound of loud shouts of merriment; and, on looking in the direction from whence they seemed to proceed, her heart leaped with joy and expectation, when she perceived a posse of sailors and females going towards her father's house.

With hurried steps, she made her way home, and looked anxiously among the group, which had by that time assembled outside of the house; but the object of her search was not among them, and her heart sunk with despair.

"What ship, messmate?" inquired Mat, of the first one to whom he could get an opportunity of speaking.

"The Vanguard," was the reply.

"Oh!" exclaimed Mat, "then mayhap you can tell us whether Gallant Tom and Richard ——"

"They are both safe and hearty, and on their way here by this time, I dare say," answered the sailor.

Ellen uttered a scream of joy, and raised her head in thankfulness to heaven.

"Ah! his sister, I suppose," said the sailor.

Some person whispered that it was Gallant Tom's sweetheart.

"Avast there!" cried the man, "that can't be—for didn't we leave Tom at Portsmouth with his sweetheart?—and precious loving they seemed together too; and no wonder either—for, damme, she must be a woman every inch of her, or she never would have assumed the disguise of a man for the purpose of following him!"

A piercing shriek prevented the sailor from saying any more, and Ellen sunk insensible into the arms of her father.

"Good God!" cried Mat, in a tone of agony; "this intelligence, true or false, has killed my poor girl!"

Mat Marlinspike bore the insensible form of his daughter into the house; and the dame, in a state of the utmost agitation, sought every means to restore her; but for sometime all her efforts were ineffectual; and when she did partially recover, her brain wandered, and, looking vacantly around the apartment, she exclaimed—

"Where is he?—the deceiver! He dare not meet my gaze!—and she, too!—ah!—there she stands! She mocks and laughs at me!—And now she presses her lips to his with all the fervor of impassioned fondness! By heaven, I cannot endure it! Do not hold me! I will tear her from him—he is mine! sworn to me in the face of Heaven! Off!—off, I say!"

Her father tried hard to persuade her not to place any confidence in what the sailor had said, who, probably, only intended it for a joke, seeing the anxiety she had betrayed when he mentioned her lover; but Ellen shook her head mournfully; and Mat himself was too doubtful that the sailor had spoken truth to urge his opinion further: in fact, he had, after Ellen had been removed, questioned the man more particularly, and he related all the circumstances that had occurred on board the vessel, in the same manner as we have detailed them before, with the exception of the one important fact, that Rosina had discovered in Tom her long-lost brother; but

with that none were acquainted but themselves, and thus the inference the sailors had drawn was a reasonable one. The companions of the man also confirmed his statement; and Mat, upon the testimony of so many, could not do otherwise than believe, although he could not reconcile it to his knowledge of Tom's honest and generous character, to think that he could heartlessly abandon that girl whom he had made such protestations of affection to for another; but he hoped that he would yet be able, and that shortly, to give some satisfactory explanation of his conduct.

The day passed away, and still Tom nor Richard did not return. Mat and his wife became very uneasy, and began to think that the sailor had either duped them, or was mistaken, and that they had both fallen in the engagement. It would be impossible to do adequate justice to the sufferings of the good old couple, as this idea darted across their imagination; but they took especial care to conceal their fears from Ellen, whose life, they felt convinced, would yield to the shock.

In the meantime, Tom and Richard, with Rosina and Patty, had been in the vicinity of "The Commodore" for the last two days; but until they had arranged the important business which occupied their minds, and Rosina had been placed in a secure retreat for the present, Tom judged it prudent not to make his appearance to his friends, notwithstanding he was anxious to see them. They had imparted the secret of their consanguinity to Richard, but strictly enjoined him to silence.

At length, Rosina succeeded in getting apartments in the house of a lady with whom she was acquainted, and upon whose friendship she could depend, and then Tom, with a heart full of hope and ecstacy, hastened towards the residence of her on whom his soul doted, accompanied by Richard.

"Hilly yeo! hilly yeo!" shouted the elated tar, when he reached the door, and gave it two or three hearty knocks with his fist; "house! house! The pretty Ellen, ahoy. Shiver my timbers, Dick, how my heart throbs as I gaze upon the old spot again; it is just the same as when I last saw it; no, it is not the same, for then there were sad faces around; but now, all looks cheerful and sunny. Ah! there's the old honey-suckle still climbing the casement; the old beach where I cut my name, and that of my darling Ellen, and a couple of hearts, with a cupid's arrow, about the length of a marlinspike, thrust through them; and, hark! there's the old clock ticking in the parlor, as though it were uttering a welcome to me, and——but, damme, what a fool I am to stand palavering here——what, ho! ship ahoy! Mat——"

Ere the honest tar could finish the sentence the door was thrown open, and Richard was locked in the arms of Mat and the dame.

"Mat! dame!" cried Tom, in a transport of delight, grasping the hands of the worthy old couple, and the big tears of joy stealing down his manly cheek, "let's shake your fins, I'm so glad to see you;—I—I—ah! Ellen, my own, my pretty Ellen!"

The poor girl could not speak, but, uttering a cry of uncontrollable delight, she rushed into the arms of her lover.

‘Ellen! Ellen!’ exclaimed the overjoyed tar, as he pressed warm kisses on her lips, her cheeks, and her forehead, and parting the silken tresses from her forehead, looked into her eyes with intense adoration; ‘oh, what a happy moment is this! I—I could laugh—I could cry—I—I—damme, what a fool I am making of myself! But, eh!—why you are pale;—you look ill! Why do you not speak to me? Not a word to your own Tom—your faithful Tom, after so long a separation? Why do you look so strangely at me? Mat! dame! speak to her—tell me what does this mean?’

Ellen withdrew herself from his arms; she gazed upon him with mysterious earnestness; she tried to speak: her lips moved but the words stifled in her throat, and, uttering a groan of agony, she fell senseless to the earth. In a state of distraction Tom rushed towards her, and raising her frantically in his arms, called wildly upon her name.

‘Mat! dame!’ he cried, ‘do not drive me to madness!—what does this mean? What has happened? Tell me; I beseech you.’

‘Bear her into the house,’ said Mat to his wife. ‘Tom, a few words will explain this; and Heaven send that it may be in your power to quiet our doubts and apprehensions, or it will break the heart of my poor girl.’

‘Doubts! apprehensions!’ repeated Tom; ‘Good God! what—’

Mat interrupted him, and drawing him aside, in as few words as possible, informed him of what they had been told.

‘Ah!’ exclaimed Tom when he had concluded, ‘is it so? I did not foresee this!’

‘Tell me, Tom,’ said Mat, with extreme emotion, ‘have we been told aright?’

‘You have, you have—but not all; the---the---I shall choke!’

‘And you love this female?’

‘As my own soul,’ answered the distracted sailor: ‘It is my duty to do so. But, Heaven can bear witness that my sentiments are unchanged towards Ellen; that---but I cannot explain any farther at present! I---’

‘Enough, enough, Tom,’ interrupted Mat, with a look of agony and reproach. ‘Heaven pardon you; but the death of my poor girl is upon your head!’

As the old man thus spoke, he rushed into the house, and left Tom paralysed to the spot with astonishment and agony.

Tom stood for a few minutes, after the old man had left him, in a complete state of stupor; his brain seemed to whirl round, and a mist to float before his eyes; at length, starting, he exclaimed,—

‘Damme! surely I have been dreaming! My mizen top is out of order; my—my—oh, shiver my timbers, I cannot stand this!—I will rush into the presence of Ellen, and explain all. Fool! how can I, unless I would break my oath, and perhaps, render all the plans to gair retribution for my sister and a restitution of her rights abortive? And, without I unfold everything, how can I do away with

the suspicions of the poor girl? It will break her heart. No, no; I will not seek an interview with her until the violence of her grief is somewhat calmed, and she may listen to me dispassionately. Oh, Ellen, never could I believe you would doubt the faith of him who would readily sacrifice his life to secure your happiness."

As the noble-hearted youth thus soliloquized, he cast his eyes up towards the casement of the apartment which he knew was appropriated to Ellen, and breathing a sigh, walked slowly from the spot.

'Alas, Tom,' he ruminated, as he bent his steps he knew not whither, 'little did you expect such a reception as this when you returned to England. You thought to meet with nothing but welcome smiles and open hands; and, to be greeted with the fondest delight by that little craft, to which your heart has ever been as true as the needle to the pole. But the gallant vessel which my ardent affections had launched upon the sea of hope, has struck upon the rock of disappointment, and threatened to founder in the ocean of despair. But—but what a lubberly swab I am making of myself; it will only be a few days, and I shall be able to explain everything, and we shall be once more happy. Oh, yes; our happiness will be ten fold; for I shall be rich, and able to make the dear a lady! Yes, my Nell shall ride in her carriage; and—oh, damme! won't she look as handsome as a seventy-four scudding lightly before the wind?"

In the mean time, the object of Toni's anxious thoughts remained in a most pitiable condition confined to her chamber. At times she would rave of her lover, and accuse him of infidelity, in the most wild and affecting manner; then she would be more calm, and speak of him and their love in the most heart-rending tones of affection.

We need not attempt to describe the anguish of her friends at the sufferings she was thus enduring. A thousand times did they upbraid the cruelty and infidelity of Tom, who, they believed, could thus coolly render himself the cause of bringing Ellen to a premature grave. Narrowly did Mat and his wife question Richard on the subject; but he was faithful to the promise he had made Rosina and Tom, and would not divulge anything that he knew, but earnestly endeavored to convince his benefactors that they wronged him, by supposing for a moment that his sentiments were in the least changed, and that a very short time, probably would explain everything to their satisfaction. Mat shook his head incredulously, and, after once more urging Richard to tell him all he knew, and expressing in severe terms, his disapprobation of what he called the lad's obstinacy, he left him to himself.

Several days passed away in this manner, and still they heard nothing from Tom. The delirium had entirely left Ellen, and her grief had settled into a calm melancholy, which showed at once that, although she had tried hard to stifle her real feelings, and to put on the semblance of resignation, her heart had received a blow from which only one circumstance could restore her, namely, indubitable proof of his constancy.

At that period, there was, at no great distance from the town, the mansion of a nobleman, which had a beautiful park and gardens at-

tached to it, which were open free to the public. This was Ellen's favorite place; and there for hours would she remain, rambling beneath the umbrageous foliage of the stately trees, or settled upon the green sward, give herself up to melancholy rumination.

It happened, that one day, about a month after Tom's return to Plymouth, the damsel, having been taking her customary walk in the park, felt tired, and consequently seated herself on a bench, fixed to the trunk of one of the trees, to rest herself. She had not been many minutes there, when she heard voices proceeding from behind the very tree at which she was seated. Some strange and unaccountable foreboding darted across her mind, and caused her to listen with breathless curiosity. The first words she could distinguish were spoken in the voice of a female, and were to the following effect:—

‘Oh, dearest Tom, would indeed that the happy moment of which you speak had arrived; but, alas! even now, although I have hitherto been so sanguine, I fear that something will come to thwart our wishes.’

‘Nonsense, my dear girl,’ replied the man: ‘this is a weakness of which I did not think you capable; depend upon it, that a few days only will elapse ere we shall see the realization of our fondest hopes, and then we shall be indissolubly united.’

The heart of Ellen beat heavily against her side; her brain seemed to be on fire; and she felt a sensation as though she should be suffocated. She could no longer delay the gratification of her painful curiosity; but, gazing from behind the tree, beheld Tom, pressing to his heart the tall and elegant form of a female.

Paralyzed to the spot with astonishment, the helpless damsel stood and gazed upon them; but she uttered no sigh,—she showed no signs of emotion. No; her sentiments in that moment seemed to undergo a terrible change; she felt as if her heart was frozen into stone, and bitter hate and revenge took possession of the place which had previously been occupied with gentle passions. She felt that if she had a weapon about her, she would not hesitate or shrink from destroying her supposed rival. It seems impossible that the feelings of any one could in so short a time undergo so extraordinary a revolution.

The back of the female was turned towards her, so that she could not observe her face, but she thought that the voice sounded familiar to her. She was all anxiety to see her features; but she did not turn, and Ellen could not go from her place of concealment without recalling herself to Tom, which she did not wish to do at that moment. She listened attentively for some time, thinking she might be entitled to overhear some more of their conversation; but it was carried on in such a low tone, that she could only catch a word here and there, and they were not of a description to afford her any information. Shortly afterwards they moved away, and she watched them till they left the park, when they were suddenly hidden from her view.

As they disappeared Ellen stood still for a second or two, and ga-

zing vacantly in the direction they had taken, burst into a wild hysterical laugh, and turned towards the path which led to her horse.

In the meantime, the Earl Fitzosbert and the hateful black had been indefatigable in their endeavors to discover the retreat of Rosina, but without success; and Saib's impatience had become almost insupportable. So fully had his mind been occupied in the above mentioned manner, that he had not a moment scarcely to turn his thoughts to anything else; but, when he had, they were devoted to a dark scheme of vengeance he was forming against those whom he detested, more especially Tom and Richard. Their return had soon been made known to him; but the story which had reached the ears of Ellen and her parents in so fatal a manner, concerning the female who had followed Tom in the ship in disguise, he had fortunately not heard of, or else, perhaps, his suspicions might have been aroused, and he might have discovered the retreat of Rosina, and committed some outrage, before proper steps could have been taken to frustrate his designs.

Notwithstanding all the precautions Saib had taken to keep his return to England a secret for the present, it very soon became known, and created astonishment in the minds of Tom and the other sailors, who never thought it possible that he could escape with his life, from the fate to which he had been consigned for his diabolical attempt.

A fortnight had now elapsed since the sailors had returned to Plymouth; and, during that interval, the earl and Saib had experienced no change, neither could they hear anything of her they sought. The earl in fact, was very well contented that the affair should remain as it was, hoping that something had happened to her so that her fortune, which was in his keeping, would be entirely his. At times the impatience of Saib alarmed him, for he would throw out his suspicions that the earl was trying to deceive him, and that he knew what had become of Rosina. The earl dreaded Saib, for he was in his power; and he knew full well, that if his revenge or hatred was once aroused, he would not hesitate to risk his own life to gratify it. Often since his return, and the account he had given of his narrow escape from death, he regretted that he had not perished, for he was the only person who knew of the dark deeds of his life; and, had he have died, all fears of detection would have ceased to torment him. What need he to fear from the boy, Richard, even supposing him to be what he suspected? He was ignorant of it, and who dare accuse him of a crime of which there was no living evidence?

It was evening, and the earl and Saib were seated in the library. It was very evident that they were both much excited, and had been quarrelling. At length Saib, who had been traversing the room with disordered steps, turned to his master and said,—

“ Then, as we have failed to succeed, Rosina is most likely dead, and you will hear no more of her, why hesitate to give me my fair share of the money you now hold in your hands? ”

"Divide that which is not mine?"

"Ay! But you are growing scrupulous, my Lord Fitzosbert: you were not wont to be so, or the title and estates of your noble name would not now have been yours. I ask nothing but what is fair. I have run many risks to serve you, and am still willing to run more; and, surely, you cannot have any reasonable objection to give me half of that which I should have had the whole, had Rosina been my wife?"

The Earl, whom the reasoning of Saib had bewildered, had not time to return any answer to his speech, for, suddenly, the attention of both was drawn to a loud noise which seemed to proceed from the hall, accompanied with the confused sound of several voices all speaking together. Hasty footsteps approached the room. The next moment the door was thrown back on its hinges; and, bowing, ironically, and hitching up his stock, Gallant Tom stood in the presence of the astonished Earl Fitzosbert and Saib.

"Tom Clewline!" exclaimed the black, while his eyes rolled fiercely upon him, and he felt in his bosom for his knife, as though he contemplated the satiation of the mortal hatred which he entertained for the sailor; but he was unarmed, while Tom had a brace of pistols in his belt, and was every way prepared for anything that might occur, and to meet any danger with resistance.

"Yes, my black shark, it is your old *friend* Tom Clewline!" answered the latter, with a sarcastic grin. "I have come to pay my respects to you, although I never expected to have the pleasure of coming athwart your hawse again. Earl Fitzosbert, your most obedient; you and I have got a little business to settle together, and so I'll just take a seat, if you please."

With these words, Tom coolly drew a chair opposite the Earl, and, sitting down, gazed with the utmost nonchalance, alternately upon him and Saib.

"What means this insolent intrusion?" at length demanded Fitzosbert, haughtily. "Leave the room immediately, fellow!"

"Don't be in a passion, Earl Thingamyjig,—damme, what's your name?—you noblemen have such devilish long ones, that it takes a fellow a day nearly to pronounce half a dozen of them. As for palaver about insolence, you can better belay it as soon as possible; but as regards calling me fellow, you're not much out there, I believe; for, if I am to believe what my messmates tell me, they say I am as honest and jolly a fellow as any in the ship's company. Now, your lordship, if you can truly state as much in your log-book, I am very much mistaken, that is all."

The Earl was so completely taken by surprise at the abrupt entrance of Tom and his bold behavior, that he could not speak for some moments. At length, somewhat recovering himself, his first impulse was to ring the bell for a servant. Tom jumped from his seat and prevented him, saying—

"Avast, there! no piping all hands yet—our conversation must be of a private nature, unless you like to let that black lubber be

made acquainted with it, why he can stay: I believe he has a pretty good knowledge of all your secrets!"

"My lord!" cried the enraged black, "will you tamely brook this insolence from the uncouth varlet?"

"Varlet! you damned figure-head of the devil!" cried the indignant sailor, darting toward Saib, and his eyes glancing fiercely upon him: "I caution you not to make use of such a term again, or may I never be able to crack a biscuit again, if I don't make a passage through your skull in the twisting of a handspike!"

"Ruffian!" exclaimed the Earl, as Tom presented his pistols at the black; "what do you mean by thus forcing yourself into my presence?"

"Oh, you shall soon know," replied Tom.

The Earl felt a strange, trembling sensation, and placed his hand upon the back of a chair to support himself.

"Do you know a person of the name of Rosina Burlington?" inquired Tom.

"Ah, Rosina!" cried the Earl, while Saib's eyes seemed as though they would start from their sockets: "how dare you—what have you to do with her?"

"More than you expect. You was her captain, I believe,—that is to say, you was guardian?"

"This is past endurance!" cried Fitzosbert: "have you come here to insult and intimidate me?"

"I come here for justice," returned Tom; "and it'll be very strange if I don't have it before I leave you. But come, belay your wrath and take it coolly, for it's no more use getting out of temper with me than trying to batter in the sides of a seventy-four with a pop-gun. Your charge has slipped her cable for some time—deserted, eh?"

The Earl made no answer.

"Silence gives consent. Well, she must have deserted him. I come to tell you news of her."

"News of her!" ejaculated the Earl. "Impossible! but where has she been all this while?"

"Under the protection of her brother," replied Tom.

The Earl turned ghastly pale for a second, and reiterated Tom's words; but then recovering himself, he turned upon him a look of the most ineffable scorn.

"Aye, you may scorn my assertions," observed Tom; "but it shall not be long before you shall be convinced of their truth. I repeat, that she has been, and is now, under the protection of her long-lost brother, who always thought that they were the children of the fisherman, Brandon. You know the rest, and, therefore, I need not tell you. You seem thunder-struck, Earl Fitzosbert; and well you may; but I have not half done with you yet."

"This is only a plan to extort money from me, and shall not go unpunished," said the Earl: "the boy you speak of was lost many years ago, and has, without a doubt, long since been dead, or he must

have been restored to his father, after the many inquiries that have been made about him."

"It is false—he lives!" cried Tom, rising from his chair,—"he lives, to protect his sister, and to tell the Earl Fitzosbert that he is a villain!"

"Ah! dare you?"

"Dare I!—to such a land-lubber as you? Why, I have dared to meet the enemy when death and horror surrounded me on every side; and it would be strange indeed if I was now to be afraid to call such a thing as you by his right name! You now hold in trust property that of right belongs to the persons that I have named: are you prepared to restore it, or to render a good account of it?"

"Unparalleled insolence!" cried Fitzosbert; "and what right have you to demand it?"

"A brother's right," replied Tom.

"You—you!" gasped forth the astonished Earl, while the agitation of Saib was plainly visible in the distortion of his frightful countenance.

"Why, you seem surprised, my worthy swabs!" exclaimed Tom, sarcastically; "but, do not doubt me, for you will too soon, most likely, have cause to know that I am speaking the truth. Earl Fitzosbert, in me, I repeat, you behold the long supposed fisherman's son, who was lost when a boy, and never expected to be heard of again. But, you see, Providence has kept a watch over me, and I am still afloat, and prepared to give that poor girl, whom you supposed to be quite friendless, the protection she so much needs. Nay, you may frown; but, damme, I care nothing for your black looks: you have acted as a cowardly, unmannerly villain, and would now, if you could, rob her out of that which justly belongs to her; but if you don't render a good account of yourself, and restore every coin, may I never chew pig-tail again, if I don't pull your house about your ears, and ——"

"Ah! am I to be insulted in my own house by this impudent ruffian?" exclaimed the Earl, in a great passion.

"I shall not take your titles angrily," said the honest tar, with the utmost coolness; "for a bad word from the mouth of such as you must be taken as a compliment; but, otherwise, if I did, I should make you cry *peccavi* in no time. I tell you what it is, I came here for the purpose of seeing whether you are prepared to pay this money without any fuss, to save the trouble of employing a lawyer; and, moreover, to see whether you are willing to make an apology to me for the manner in which you treated my sister; but as you have not shown any intention of doing one or the other, why ——"

"By heavens! I will not put up with this!" cried the enraged Earl, whom the coolness and perfect *sang froid* of Tom exasperated more than all;—"and there, Saib, you stand as though you were paralyzed, and do not offer to aid me. Leave my house, or you shall deeply repent of your insolence and attempt at imposition! Leave the house immediately, I say!"

"Then I shall do no such thing," replied Tom, re-seating himself.

"I have not seen you for a long time, therefore you need not be surprised if I should make my visit rather a long one. I have a good many affectionate inquiries to make, and also some particulars to relate, which, perhaps, may be rather interesting to one of you. Perhaps you would like to know where Rosina has been all this time?—if so, I will inform you. On board the same vessel—mark you, my black pirate,—on board the very same vessel in which you sailed, until you was so justly punished for the monstrous crime which you would have committed. Yes, disguised as Joe Gordon, she followed me throughout the voyage, and was as often by your side as any of the crew; and yet, you see, with all your penetration, you could not discover her."

"Curses light upon my stupidity!" cried the black, in a hoarse, guttural voice. "Yes, it must have been her, and that accounts for the strange feeling that came over me whenever I was near her, and the deep impression her features had upon me;—fool that I was not to know her!"

"And now, Earl Fitzosbert," said Tom, rising, "I shall leave you, the next you will hear of me and Rosina, will be through a lawyer; and you may thank your lucky stars that I have not taken summary vengeance on you for your villainous conduct to that poor girl, whom you had a right to protect. As for you, you black swab, the next time you are caught at any of your tricks, look out for squalls; for, damme, if you don't keep a good look-out after you, and if I catch you doing anything wrong, I'll rob the gallows of its due, and send you to Davy Jones on the spot."

Saib bit his lips, but said nothing,—while Tom, rising from his chair, hitched up his trousers, and, bowing sarcastically to them both, moved towards the door.

"Hold!" suddenly exclaimed the Earl, in a voice of much agitation; "you shall not leave this place until you have given me further particulars of this affair."

"I have told you all that I think proper to do, at present," said Tom; "as for my going away, what's to prevent me, I should like to know?"

"Saib, your aid!—I command you!" cried the Earl, as he rushed furiously towards Tom, who, deliberately taking his pistols from his belt, presented them at him and Saib, and held them both at bay, at the same time saying, in a determined manner,—

"Earl Fitzosbert, again I warn you to keep off; for, may I never go aloft again, if either you or your black companion advance but one-inch further, to prevent my departing from this house, that same moment shall be your last."

After giving utterance to these words, Tom fixed upon the Earl and his creature a look of defiance, and gradually retreated from the room. The Earl and Saib were about to follow him; but they heard a hearty laugh, which made the walls re-echo again, and, looking over the banisters, they found that Tom had come fully prepared for anything that might take place—for in the hall stood at least seven or eight jolly and hardy sons of Neptune, who had given

utterance to the laugh of derision and exultation which they had heard, at a signal given by Tom. The latter once more cast his eyes up towards the spot where Fitzosbert and Saib were standing : then, beckoning to his companions, the door was opened, and they quitted the house.

For a moment after Tom and his companions left the place, the Earl and his guilty myrmidon were transfixed to the spot, and gazed upon each other in speechless astonishment ; at length the former starting suddenly, and looking towards the staircase, exclaimed,—

“ Why was the villain, the bold-faced beggar, suffered to escape ? Have I, indeed, sunk so low, that even a low-born wretch like this sailor shall presume to beard me in my own house ; and—but I forgot—he said he was the brother of Rosina, did he not ? Impossible ! It is all a vile plot, for the purpose of extorting money from me, but it shall not succeed.”

Saib shook his head, and replied,—

“ I am afraid, my lord, Tom’s words are true ; and you may perceive that the likeness between him and Rosina is very strong, when you come to look closer to them. A thousand curses light upon the chance which made this discovery—or that I had not contrived some means to silence him forever, while we were on board the same vessel together !”

The Earl bit his lips, and, folding his arms, paced the room with hasty and disordered steps ; at length, turning suddenly to Saib, he said,—

“ If, then, this is really the brother of Rosina Burlington, and no doubt he would not make so bold an assertion without being in possession of unquestionable proof that he is so, all our schemes, as far as the damsel is concerned, are at an end, and the readiest way to escape the public odium that would be sure to fall upon me is to pay over the money at once, and for you to resign all hopes of Rosina, whom you could never have anticipated getting possession of, but by force.”

“ Resign Rosina ?—never ! By hell, I would sooner lose my life, after what I have hazarded to gain the consummation of my wishes ! Earl Fitzosbert, you are becoming a coward ! Resign not a farthing, I beseech you, until it has been fairly sued for. What ! would you give this bold and insolent youth the means of boasting that he had frightened you out of it ? Pshaw ! become a man again, and doubt not it will yet be your fortune to triumph,—at any rate it shall not be any fault of mine if you do not.”

“ Alas ! Saib,” replied the Earl, in a gloomy tone, “ lately a heavy weight has seemed to press upon my heart, and I have not the spirit that I was wont. My thoughts have been haunted with terrible forebodings, and I have had a dream —”

“ Dreams !” interrupted the black, with a bitter sneer ; “ bah !—my lord, I am ashamed of you : you are worse than a child. Come, you must banish these sickly ideas from your memory.”

“ I would I could do so,” observed the Earl ; “ but they gain more strength every day. You mock me, when I talk to you of the

visions that haunt my pillow. Oh, would that I could treat them as lightly, Saib! You cannot form any conception of their horror. Last night I dreamed too that my —— I cannot, dare not, speak the name, was alive, and had come here to hurl me from my ill-gotten grandeur, and to demand retribution upon my head."

"I have no patience with this preposterous nonsense!" cried Saib; "and yet you are continually bothering me with your idle fears and imaginations! I tell you from your brother you have nothing to fear; long ere this, he has become nothing but dust. Come, come; you must arouse yourself, my lord, from this weakness, and learn once more to be a man. At any rate, I am determined not to resign my prey so easily as they probably imagine I will; and if I cannot accomplish my wishes, I will take care that I will not fail in having vengeance."

"There has already been too much bloodshed; and I would that what we seek could be effected without adopting such sanguinary measures," observed the Earl.

"Why, my lord," returned Saib, "the visit of this sea-shark seems to have quite unnerved you. What have we to fear from him?"

"If he is really the brother of Rosina, everything," answered Fitzosbert.

"Pshaw!" ejaculated the black, impatiently; "this is ridiculous. Should Tom prove himself to be the brother of the girl, what more can he do to you than compel you to restore the money you now hold in trust, as Rosina's guardian?"

"And where will then be your hopes?" demanded the Earl.

"Leave that to me," returned the black; "for the present, let us endeavor to devise some means to discover the retreat of Rosina."

"That will avail us nothing if we do," said the Earl; "for she has now an efficient protector, and any outrage committed by us, would sure to be punished."

"Punished!" sneered Saib; "well, be it so; but I'll take especial care that they do not punish me for doing nothing;—my enemies shall have good cause to repent of having aroused my wrath. But for the present, I leave you, my lord, as you are in no fit mood to discuss this subject. When we meet again, I hope you may have recovered from the nervous debility which at present afflicts you."

Saib uttered these last words with a sarcastic smile, and an expression of countenance which showed that he held the Earl in utter defiance and contempt; then bowing formal, left him to his reflection.

* * * * *

In the meantime, Ellen, in the solitude of her chamber, gave way to the violence of her anguish, caused by the supposed faithlessness of Tom, and was deaf to all the endeavors of her parents to console her.

In the midst of this bitter suffering, her mother entered the apartment, and presented her with a letter. Her heart throbbed violently against her side, and her hand trembled as she took the letter from her mother, in whose countenance there was a mingled expression

of anxiety, hope, and fear. She looked at the superscription, her heart seemed to rise to her throat, and she had the utmost difficulty in breathing. Well did she know the hand-writing—the letter was from Tom. For a moment or two she stood hesitating how to act. For a moment a mist seemed to rise before her eyes, and she could not read a word; and in a voice choked with emotion she said, putting the letter into her mother's hand,

‘I—I cannot read it; dear mother—you—

She could not finish the sentence; but her mother understood what she meant, and she proceeded to read the *billet doux*. It was couched in the most affectionate terms, and, after energetically expressing the sorrow he had caused her, owing to his not being at liberty to enter into an explanation before, he protested in glowing colors, the strength, the unabated ardor of his passion for her, and then went on to give a full explanation of what has already been related, concealing, however, the name of his sister, but promising to present her to Ellen, on an assurance of her forgiveness.

The poor girl listened to this letter in profound astonishment, and fixed her eyes vacantly upon her mother without uttering a word; but when she had come to the conclusion she suddenly snatched the letter from her, and with eager eyes retraced every sentence.

“Yes, yes, it is so,” she said in a voice of delirious joy; “he is still faithful to me; oh, what an injustice I have done him!”

With frantic ecstasy she pressed the letter again and again to her lips, and placing her head on her mother's shoulder, the intensity of her feelings found relief in a copious flood of tears.

Her mother did not offer to interrupt her; and indeed her joy was so great at the prospect of a reconciliation being effected between Ellen and Tom, that she was too overpowered to speak.

“But why do I stand here?” exclaimed Ellen, suddenly starting from her mother's side, and wiping away the tears that glistened like drops of crystal on her eyelids; “let me hasten to him, to assure him of my love, and crave his pardon for having ventured to doubt his faith. I cannot, I will not rest until I have seen him.”

As she spoke she hurried down the stairs, followed by her mother; she reached the parlor, and scarcely had she done so, when the door was thrown open;—there was a cry of joy, and Ellen found herself locked in the fond embrace of her faithful lover.

“My Ellen, my dearest, my pretty Ellen, look up and smile upon me!” exclaimed the gallant sailor, as he pressed still closer to his bosom the form of his love, and imprinted kisses the most impassioned upon her lips: “It is Tom, your own faithful Tom! Poor girl! her feelings have overpowered her; she does not hear me—she looks like a sleeping angel, or a moonbeam upon the ocean! Ellen, dear Ellen, speak to me!”

But Ellen still remained unconscious of all around; and with difficulty her mother persuaded Tom to resign her to her care; but nothing could induce him to leave the room until she was recovered.

A few minutes served to revive her, and opening her eyes, and looking vacantly into the countenance of her mother, she said,—

"Oh, mother, I have had such a sweet dream ; too delightful, indeed, to be realized. Methought that Tom had returned to me, and assured me of his constancy, and that"—

"My dearest lass, it was no dream," exclaimed her lover rushing forward, and once more enfolding her in his arms ; "your Tom is here to assure you of his constancy, and kiss his recollection upon your lips."

"Ah ! then you have not deceived me, Tom ?" ejaculated the damsel, while her countenance beamed with love and transport ; "you are still the same true and faithful Tom that you professed to be ?"

"Still the same, Ellen," returned Tom ; "oh, how could you doubt me ? How could you imagine that I could be the villain to deceive you ?—that I could suffer another to supplant me in your heart ? This, this was not like my Ellen. Oh, my dear girl, nothing could ever have induced me to suspect your constancy. No, never would I have done you the injustice to suppose that, after the many vows you have pledged to me, you could prove untrue ! Oh, Ellen, did you but know my feelings—could you but read my heart as I can yours, in your pretty eyes that twinkled upon me with such lustre, —you would see how fondly, how sincerely, how devotedly, my heart is attached to you, and you alone. Though many miles have separated us, still have you always been present to my thoughts : nothing could have erased you from my memory. In the dreary watch, in the raging storm, in battle's heat, my Ellen was never absent from my mind ; and it was her dear image which nerved me on to deeds of valor, and to smile at danger. When sleep closed my eyelids, then would delightful visions take me back to this loved spot, and imagination would give me a repetition of all my former happiness ; and yet, my Ellen, to imagine that I could prove untrue to her, and —"

"Oh, Tom," interrupted Ellen, while her eyes beamed with all that ardent affection which her heart prompted, "reproach me not, although too well I feel I deserve it. I should not have doubted you : I ought to have known my Tom better ; but some strange infatuation took possession of my senses, and then that dreadful tale, and the female with whom I saw you, all conspired to make me think you perfidious, although my heart was almost broken in admitting what I thought to be the fatal truth."

"Ah ! did you then see us together ?" asked Tom, eagerly.

"I saw you with a female in the gardens of Sir Richard Overton," answered Ellen ; "nay, more, I overheard you breathe to her words of the utmost tenderness of love,—I saw you press your lips to her's. Judge, then, Tom, whether your Ellen had not a sufficient cause to imbibe suspicion ?"

"You said you heard all this," remarked Tom, "and yet the female was not recognized by you ?"

"Her back was towards me, so that I did not see her features," replied Ellen. "Oh, Tom, how shall I describe my feelings at that time ? I shudder, even now, when I recollect them ; a dreadful change had in a moment come over my heart ; and yes, Tom, well

may you start—at that moment I could have become a murderer! I could have plunged a knife into the heart of my supposed rival, and exulted at the deed!"

Tom did indeed shudder when he reflected upon the dreadful catastrophe which might have taken place. Again he pressed his love still more closely to his bosom, and imprinted kisses of delight upon her lips.

"Ellen," said he, "you had indeed occasion to hoist the yellow flag; you had apparently sufficient cause for suspicion; but had you heard the whole of the conversation that passed between us, you would have ascertained that that female was my newly dis covered sister."

"Your sister?"

"Aye, my dearest lass," returned Tom,—"my own fond sister, whom, next to my Ellen, I love with all the ardor that can possibly be felt—that sister who is prepared to love the destined bride of her brother with that strength and sincerity which only such noble minds as her's is capable of feeling."

"Her name?" anxiously gasped forth the maiden.

"She is here to answer for herself," said Tom, throwing open the parlor door; "behold!"

"Rosina Burlington!" ejaculated Ellen, with mute astonishment, as the latter bounded into the room and advanced to embrace her, with looks of the utmost ecstasy and attachment.

"Yes, it is Rosina," answered she, "the cause of all your late anguish, but whose constant study shall be to repay you, by her future love and attention; regarding, as she does, with admiration and pleasure, the fidelity of your love for a dear brother, from whom she has been so long separated."

As Rosina said this, she offered to embrace Ellen, but the latter shrank back timidly, at the differences of their stations, which Rosina perceiving, encouraged her by a look of sweetness which was perfectly irresistible; and the next moment the two beautiful females, like two twin graces, were locked in a fervent embrace.

"Hurrah!" cried Tom, in a transport of delight, and tears of joy rushing to his eyes; "yard-arm to yard-yard. Oh, shiver me, if this job won't be the death of me, through downright pleasure! What a happy fellow I shall be, to be sure, to have to divide my affections between two such dear creatures! But, eh—what's the meaning of that cloud passing over your lovely countenance, Ellen? You sigh, too!—come, come, belay that, lass; the storm has all passed over, and there is no cause for sorrow now."

"Alas, Tom," said Ellen, "your good fortune will be my only cause of misery: you will now be rich, and move in that station to which your birth entitles you, while the humble Ellen ——"

"Ellen," interrupted Tom, hastily, "think you that any change of circumstances can alter my sentiments towards you? By heaven! if riches were to be purchased only by the forfeiture of my Ellen, I would sooner be condemned to poverty and the meanest hovel. No, no, my dearest girl, you alone it is that forms the principal

charm of my life, and, without you, all else would become completely valueless to me."

A happy evening was passed at "The Old Commodore," among Mat, his wife, Ellen, and their two guests, the house being closed against public visitors, and Rosina particularly keeping out of sight of any one that knew her, fearful that the knowledge of her being in the neighborhood might reach the ears of those who had, at present, some cause to dread. The heavy care which had formerly pressed so heavy upon the heart of Ellen, and clad her features in an aspect of gloom, had entirely disappeared; and happy in the confidence of her possessing the love of Tom, she had not a thought besides which could cause her the least uneasiness. As for Tom and Rosina, they seemed sufficiently happy in seeing the good effects this reconciliation had upon Ellen; and Mat and his dame did all that they possibly could to contribute to the pleasure of those around them.

It was late when Tom and Rosina took their departure, and Mat and his family were about to retire to rest, when they were suddenly surprised by hearing a loud knocking at the outer-door.

"Who can this be, at such an hour as this?" said Mat, as he went to the window, up stairs, and looked out.

"Who is it that knocks?" he demanded.

"A traveler who is weary and footsore, and claims the indulgence of a night's rest and shelter," was the answer.

"Humph," said Mat, "it's a pity you could not come before, master; we are just going to retire, and I don't know what to say to you. I do not recollect your voice—who, and what are you?"

"A stranger to you, I rather think; and doubtless, to most persons in this neighborhood, now," answered the man.

Mat stretched his head out of the window as far as he could, but it was so dark that he was unable to make out more than a tall figure apparently enveloped in a mantle, which stood in the doorway. Mat hesitated and looked at his wife and daughter, who did not encourage him by the expression of their countenances, to comply with the applicant's wishes.

"For goodness sake, do not keep me standing here in suspense, or I shall faint with exhaustion at your door," said the man, "I assure you you have no cause to fear."

"As for fear, master," returned Mat, "you musn't come to an old seaman to talk about that. Well, I e'en chance letting you in, and if you play me false, only mind that you are not taken in, that's all."

Having thus spoken, Mat took the lamp in one hand, and grasping a stout stick in the other, descended the stairs, and unbolted the door.

The person who entered was enveloped in a long mantle, and presented the tall figure of a man, apparently about fifty years of age, and of noble appearance, but whose clothes were very old, and whose countenance, which had evidently once been handsome, had an expression of deep melancholy and care. Mat having eyed him minutely, and having discovered all these particulars in a moment,

handed him a chair in the chimney-corner, in which the stranger took his seat, and as he did so, sighed deeply.

"Thanks, my good sir, for this kindness," said he. "I was indeed afraid that I should not have obtained a shelter this night: and weary as I am, I should never have been able to support it. I am very much obliged to you for your kindness."

"Oh, I need no thanks, sir," returned honest Mat; "it is indeed, seldom that any is turned churlishly away from 'The Old Commodore.'"

"The Old Commodore!" repeated the stranger thoughtfully; ah! I remember now—but, so near?"

"You seem to have traveled far, sir," said Mat inquisitively, after having ordered his wife to hasten for a glass of good stiff grog, and afterwards to bring forward such refreshments as they had in the house, of which there was always an ample store, plain but the best quality.

"You are right," answered the stranger; "I have indeed walked many weary miles, and am fatigued and footsore."

"You are a stranger in this neighborhood, methinks," observed Mat; "at least, I never remember to have seen you before."

"For many years I have been a stranger to this place," replied the man with a sigh; "but well do I—no matter, the time is past now; and it is perhaps imprudent of me—ah! the grog!"

With these broken and unconnected sentences, the stranger, who seemed anxious to avoid being questioned, took the glass from the hand of the dame, and politely pledging Mat and her, raised it to his lips and drank heartily, seeming to be refreshed by it.

Mat observed the behavior of his guest with much curiosity; there was something in his appearance and manners which deeply interested him; and from his noble demeanor, he was confident that he had moved in a higher sphere of life. His features, too, particularly struck him; and there was a something in their expression which was quite familiar to him; but he could not at the time call to mind whether he had seen them before, or where. Some heavy affliction evidently weighed upon his spirits; for, at intervals he seemed perfectly abstracted from all around him, and he frequently sighed deeply. He partook greedily of the refreshments which the good dame placed before him, and seemed as though he had long been fasting.

The curiosity of the dame was not more excited than that of her husband; but she had no means of gratifying it, for the stranger seemed too taciturn to lead them to suppose that they would be able to elicit anything from him.

Having finished his repast, he looked up, and addressing himself to Mat, he said,—

"Does the Earl Fitzosbert, *as he calls himself*, (laying particular emphasis on the latter words,) still reside in the neighborhood?"

Mat answered in the affirmative and added—"You know the earl, then?"

"Know him," cried the stranger, with much emotion, "Oh God! have I not reason to know the——"

"Villain you would add, I know," remarked Mat; "and indeed you would only speak the truth, if you did, for he is well known to be such here. Respectable persons of his own rank avoid him. If you should see him, tell him this is the character old Mat Marlinspike gave you of him, who cares no more about him than he would about cracking a biscuit, or swallowing a mouthful of salt pork."

"He is indeed a villain, a most blood-thirsty, treacherous villain!" exclaimed the stranger, warily; then suddenly checking himself, he added,—"but it is growing late; with your permission I will retire to rest."

Mat immediately took up the lamp, and preceding the stranger up the stairs, showed him into the clean and neat chamber in which he was to pass the night.

"Did you not notice the extraordinary likeness?" observed the dame, when he came down stairs again.

"His face is familiar to me; but for the life of me, I can't call to mind where I have seen him before," answered Mat.

"Why, how foolish you must be, not to discover it in a moment, Mat," said the dame, priding herself upon her own penetration; "why he is the very image of our Richard. Goodness me, when he came in——"

"You are right dame, by jingo," interrupted her husband; "he is exactly like the boy, now I think of it; but what of that? There is nothing at all wonderful in that circumstance, for there are many faces alike in this world."

Mat, however, did feel more than he thought proper to acknowledge, and he could not get the stranger out of his thoughts the whole of the night; even in his dreams his form was again presented to his imagination, and he awoke in the morning more anxious than ever to know who and what he was.

The morning's repast being ready, and the stranger not having yet descended from his chamber, Mat hastened to summon him to attend. Shortly afterwards he came down stairs, and after paying the usual compliments of the day to Mat and his wife, he prepared to take his seat at the table, when his eyes suddenly encountered Richard, and no sooner did he behold him, than he gave a convulsive start, and turned red and white alternately. Mat and the others noticed his agitation with astonishment, but did not offer to interrupt him. For several minutes he remained as it were petrified to the spot; but at length, without speaking a word, took his seat at the table, and fixing his eyes upon Richard, never removed them from him during the repast, and his mind seemed totally abstracted from everything else. He eat but little; and he also seemed to be violently agitated. Mat and his wife watched him narrowly, and exchanged mutual glances of significance. At length, when the breakfast was over the stranger arose, and turning to Mat, requested him to favor him with a few minutes' conversation alone. Mat readily

complied, and led the way into another apartment, where they remained closeted for some time; and when they returned to the parlor, the emotion visible upon both their countenances, plainly showed that the subject of their discourse had been something important. There was a mingled expression of joy and surprise in the face of Mat, which not a little increased the wonder and anxiety of his wife, who eagerly waited till they were alone, thinking that the former would divulge what had take place between him and the stranger. She was, however, doomed to be disappointed, for the latter shortly after his return to the parlor, quitted the house, and instead of Mat furnishing her with the information for which she was so anxiously waiting, he strictly enjoined her to be secret upon the subject of the stranger having visited their house, and firmly refused to reveal to her anything that had taken place at the interview. He told her, notwithstanding, that in a very short time he should probably be permitted to disclose to her everything, and she would then find that the subject was one of rejoicing instead of misfortune.

With this explanation the dame was forced to be satisfied for the present; but she murmured a good deal about it. Mat was particularly cheerful the whole of the day; and it was noticed that he paid more than usual attention to Richard, and seemed to be very uneasy when out of his presence.

* * * * *

When Saib left the Earl Fitzosbert, after the scene which we have described that took place between the two mentioned persons and Tom, he walked immediately from the house. The interview he had had with the gallant sailor, and the scorn, the triumph, and the threats of the latter, together with the assertion he had made with regard to Rosina being his sister, filled the bosom of the savage African with the most unbounded rage and distraction. He clenched his fist as he walked along, and gnashed his teeth. He felt at that moment capable of committing the most hellish deed to gratify his revenge; and curses deep and horrible, frequently escaped his lips, when he thought upon the manner in which he had invariably been foiled in his diabolical schemes, and always when so near the attainment of his object;—foiled, too, principally through the instrumentality of Tom Clewline, (the name by which our hero had always been known in the navy, and to which he seemed more attached than that which really belonged to him). In the first instance, when he had discovered by the conversation he had overheard to take place between Mat and his wife, that the right heir to the proud estates of Fitzosbert, still existed in the person of the boy Richard, and his life was in his hands, the latter had been rescued by the sailor at the very critical moment. The second attempt he had made, was also not only thwarted by the same individual, but he was punished by being impressed on board ship, and hurried away from the theatre of his crimes, his wishes, and his prospects; treated like a dog; mocked at, and reviled by the very man against whom his bosom glowed with the most sanguinary feelings of revenge; and when brought up to a pitch of madness, and

ungovernable hatred of every one, and tired of his own life, he had determined upon sacrificing it, and immolating the whole of the crew, his design had again been frustrated, at the very moment that the spark was being applied to the train, which would have sent them all into eternity, by Gallant Tom, who had been directed thither by the other being he had so much cause to hate—the boy Richard. With the thoughts of a demon, he recalled to his memory the punishment he had undergone for that offence; the dreadful sufferings he had endured; and as he did so, the blood seemed to rush scalding hot through his veins, and his whole frame was convulsed with the power of the furious passions that they gave rise to.

“An eternal curse, one universal malediction light upon the heads of all those whom I so fiercely hate!” he exclaimed, in a voice hoarse with rage. “May they never know a moment’s peace—never experience one minute’s happiness for the torture, the disappointment, they have caused the despised, the detested, black man! But I will be avenged! Yes, deeply, dreadfully avenged! Nor heaven, nor hell, shall ultimately thwart me in the gratification of my desires! The black man fears no danger to gain his ends, and by the infernal host, they shall yet tremble at my power, and writhe beneath the agonies it shall be my delight to cause them! Oh, how I will glut over the work of my hands! Their groans of anguish will be as music to mine ears; and their cries for mercy be met by me with the scornful laugh of exultation! Yes, Tom Clewline, Richard Fitzosbert, Rosina, all, all shall feel the full terrors of the deadly vengeance they have aroused. Rosina must and shall be mine! The proud, scornful beauty, shall become the mistress of the hated African; and her brother shall know of her disgrace, her shame, her destruction, without having it in his power to assist or to save her. Fool! blind idiot that I must be, not to recognize the girl under the disguise she had assumed on board the vessel! What a famous opportunity for the gratification of my desires did I lose; and even had I been foiled in that, I would have taken care that she should not have lived for another to revel in those charms I covet: no, the deep bosom of the ocean should have formed her grave!”

Saib here paused; and folding his arms across his expansive chest, leaned his back against a rock, and gazed over the ocean with an expression of countenance which showed that his mind was intent upon the perpetration of some disgraceful scene. Suddenly, he fixed his eyes upon a vessel which was lying at anchor, at no great distance, and as he did so, his features relaxed somewhat from their sternness, and a smile of exultation overspread them, as a sudden thought seemed to dart upon his brain.

“Ah! I have it,” he cried, in a voice of pleasure; “a scheme of vengeance rushes in a moment to my mind, which cannot fail of succeeding. Yonder lies the ‘Nancy,’ she is thought here to be a fair trading vessel; but little do the fools suspect her real character. It is strange that this idea did not occur to me before!—but it is not too late. I must see Will Barnsley directly, and no doubt he will readily fall into my scheme. This Tom must be disposed of in some

way or other, to prevent his urging his claims in behalf of his sister and himself; and I have this moment thought of a plan, which will not only effectually accomplish that object, but do away with all fear of his ever coming here to trouble us again. Once having got him out of the way, it shall not be long ere Rosina shall be in my power, and I will amply repay myself for the past. Now, revenge, thou art securely within my grasp!"

As the black man thus spoke, he hurried on his way, fully bent upon the immediate execution of the diabolical scheme which had entered his mind.

CHAPTER V.

In the parlor of a low public-house, known at that time by the sign of "The Blue Anchor," and which was greatly resorted to by the sailors, their lasses, crimps, jew peddlers, &c., sat a strong party of sailors, with several females. They were all of them doing ample justice to the tobacco, for the objects in the room were scarcely distinguishable, owing to the dense clouds of smoke by which it was filled; and the tables were loaded with grog, the merits of which the guests were fairly discussing. There was a mixed assemblage of merchantmen, men-o'-war-men, &c.; and some of them, it must be confessed, were by no means prepossessing in their appearance. The females present were of the lowest description; and the language that occasionally was made use of by them, was anything but calculated to afford pleasure and satisfaction to ears polite.

At a small round table, near the fireside, and apart from any of the rest, with the exception of two or three rough-looking individuals, to whom he addressed his conversation, sat a square-built, middle-aged man, with a dark, swarthy countenance, large, fierce-looking eyes, and huge black whiskers. He was dressed in a large pea-jacket, a broad-brimmed tarpaulin hat, and a very capacious pair of boots, which reached up to his thighs. He was smoking, and holding a conversation in an undertone with his companions, over whom he seemed to exercise considerable authority. The presence of this individual could not fail to fix the attention of the beholder in an instant; and there was something so peculiarly expressive in his countenance, that few could gaze upon it without a sensation of disgust and horror. The other persons in the room seemed to take but little notice of him and his companions; while they, on the other hand, did not appear to be at all anxious to associate with them. Sometimes, indeed, they would respond to a toast, or join in the laugh, which ever and anon the tough yarns the sailors were spinning to one another would excite; but then it did not seem to be done spontaneously; and they immediately relapsed into their previous behavior, and entering into conversation among themselves, did not appear to be taking any notice of what was passing around.

It was night, and the blaze of the fire, and the smoking tumblers

of grog, were by no means a cheerless or unpleasant sight. The moon was shining above, over the sea, like a pale girl gazing into a looking-glass ; and the white sails of the different vessels lying at anchor, reflected upon her silvery beams, looked like so many fluttering spirits of the air. But the sailors took no notice of the weather or the moon ; their thoughts were entirely engrossed by the stories they were narrating to one another, and in quaffing deep potations.

In the midst of a group of attentive listeners, sat a handsome, weather-beaten sailor, about forty years of age, with a huge quid in his mouth, a long pipe in his jaws, and a pig-tail of such an enormous length, that the end of it nearly swept the floor. He had been spinning several yarns, much to the amusement of his companions, and was evidently about to treat them with another, for they were all most eagerly watching him, with their mouth wide open, and silence had more than once been proclaimed, and peremptorily enforced, by a loud knocking on the table.

"Well, I say, messmates," began Dick Taffrail, (for so was the sailor alluded to called) "I was going to say, as how, I'll be bound that there is not many that are seated here, as have cruised on board a pirate?"

At the mention of this name, the man whom we first described, and who before did not seem to be paying any attention to the conversation, jumped suddenly upon his feet, his companions following his example ; and they fixed their eyes fiercely and intently upon Dick and the others, who observed their behavior with considerable astonishment.

"Hallo ! captain," exclaimed Dick Taffrail, addressing himself to the man in the pea-jacket, "what's in the wind, now ? Why, damme, you look as——"

"As what ?" shouted the captain fiercely ; hark ye, my fine fellow, I would advise you to belay your lingo a little more, and mind how you call honest men in future, pirates!"

"Why, shiver my timbers, captain, you are off like a sky-rocket," said Dick, with perfect coolness : "but avast, avast, you are all abaft for once, I accused no one—not I ; God forbid that I should call any man out of his right name!"

The captain, as he was called, exhibited a great deal of confusion, and seemed to recollect himself, looked significantly at his companions, and resumed his seat without saying another word. Dick Taffrail then turned his quid, took a hearty swig of grog, and resumed as follows :—

"Well, as I was about to say, messmates, it was once my ill-fortune to get amongst pirates, and to be forced to sail with 'em for some time. The vessel to which I belonged, was a merchant-ship, called 'The Saucy Peggy,' and we were bound to St. Domingo,—this was in 1769 or 1770, I'm not sartain which : however, that's no matter. We were sailing right in the wind's eye, when suddenly one of the men discovered a strange looking vessel bearing down upon our larboard tack, and at such a rate, that she must be on to us in no time. She was a black-looking brig ; and as she swept

over the ocean, looked as gloomy as a hearse. We hoisted our colors directly ; but she did not return the compliment.

“ ‘I don’t much like the appearance of this craft,’ said the captain, addressing himself to the purser, who happened to be standing by. ‘Port helm !’ he shouted, running towards the forecastle ; ‘we will get out of her way, if possible !’ His orders were obeyed, but it was no use ; the vessel neared us like lightning, for a rare fast sailer she was ; and it was not long ere she had got so close to us, that we could distinguish her build very distinctly.

“ ‘By G— !’ ejaculated the captain, ‘this is a pirate as sure as I live !’

“ And sure enough it was ; and a rare saucy one too ; for the next moment they hoisted the black flag, and fired a gun as a signal for us to heave to. This polite request our captain, however, thought fit to decline, and again ordered us to stretch every stitch of canvas we could, and endeavor to elude the enemy ; for we were in a very poor condition to resist it, and any chance was better, he considered, than falling into their hands. It was no use ; the pirate fired after us, and struck our vessel in the waist, but did not do her much harm. It was now very clear that we must either quietly submit, or fight for it ; and as the latter was by far the most preferable way, we made all the preparations which we could in so short a time, and every man went to his post. My eyes ! I shall never forget the first salute the pirate gave us—it made every timber in the ship tremble ! ‘She carries some very heavy metal,’ says the captain, ‘but we have justice on our side, so let us do our best.’ We did do our best ; but it was all to no purpose. The pirates boarded us, and me and Joe Atkins, Ned Binnacle, two other men, and a boy, being all that survived, were taken on board the pirate brig. Our ill-fated vessel was then stripped of all its cargo and burnt. These swabs, the pirates, were the most desperate set of ruffians I ever knew, and they delighted in murder. The captain of them was a fellow who stood about six feet two inches high, and stout with it ; his features were large and ferocious ; and his eyes were enough to frighten any one to look at them. He was called ‘The Sea Devil,’ and a very proper name for him too, for a greater devil than him there could not be. His men were all afraid of him ; for, if they offended him, their life was sure to pay the penalty of it. Only the day after I had been on board their vessel, one of the crew having murmured at obeying some orders which the pirate captain had given him, he had him stripped immediately and lashed to the gratings ; and he was flogged so severely that when they went to release him, the poor devil was a corpse.

“ So you see, my lads,” continued Dick, “ we could not expect to have a very pleasant berth among ‘em, and we was not disappointed neither. We was obliged to be very cautious in our behavior, and to do many things which made our blood boil again, or else we should very soon have been sent to Davy Jones’ locker. But the poor boy was worse off of us all ; for, from the very first moment that we was taken on board, the pirate captain seemed to have taken

a dislike to him, and he knocked and kicked him about shamefully. The poor lad could not do anything to please him—he was constantly at him—and made him do more heavy and laborious duty than any of the crew. He was a delicate looking boy, with a melancholy countenance, and of a meek disposition, but no one of any feeling could be off liking him, for he was so civil and so willing to do anything he was told.

"One day, poor Ben happened to be sitting on the bowsprit, when the pirate came upon deck, and observing him, seized a marline-spike that was just handy, and dealing him a violent blow, knocked him overboard. Horror-struck at such an event, I rushed forward, with an intention to endeavor to save the boy, but the captain held me back fiercely, and threatened to serve me the same if I offered to move. I was compelled to obey; but I looked upon the spot where Ben had disappeared with feelings of horror. There was a pool of blood upon the crest of one of the waves, and in a second afterwards, (although any one would have thought that the violent blow which he had dealt him must have killed him) he arose again, the blood streaming over his ashy face. He was quite erect, as though he was standing; and although it was but an instant before he sunk to rise no more, in that brief space of time, I saw him as plain as I see one of you now, fix his eyes solemnly on his murderer, in a manner which I shall never forget. I turned away with a shudder, and said to myself: 'for this cruel deed, the spirit of poor Ben Walton will haunt you, or my name is not Dick Taffrail!'"

"And did it, Dick?" very eagerly inquired about a dozen of the anxious listeners.

"Did it!" reiterated Dick; "aye, aye, indeed it did, my lads, or may I never eat salt junk again. What I am relating is as true as the Bible. I witnessed it with my own eyes, and I can, therefore, vouch for its being correct. Ben's ghost was almost our constant companion ever after that."

"How was that?" asked one of the sailors.

"Why I'll tell you," returned Dick. "The night after this shocking affair—I think it was the sixth watch when I was on duty—that I suddenly heard a deep sigh, which seemed to be breathed close behind me; but thinking it was the wind, I took no notice of it at first, but in a very few seconds it was repeated, and staring round I proceeded forward. The moon was shining brightly, and everything was as clear upon deck as if it had been the middle of the day; and casting my eyes towards the bowsprit, you may guess how alarmed and astonished I was, when I beheld poor Ben seated across it, (or rather it was his ghost) with his face looking so pale, and the blood streaming down it, just the same as he had looked when he appeared in the water for the last time.

At first I was so surprised that I had not the power to move; but in a minute or two, I called to the other men who were on duty, and who saw it also. It did not remain on the bowsprit, but, all in an instant, it would disappear, and would be seen on the extreme point of the jib-boom. Sometimes it would be seen standing in the rat-

lines ; then seated on top of the companion, or on the binnacle ; but there was no way of shutting it out from our sight—turn which way we would, the ghost of Ben Walton was sure to be before us. It was an awful sight, and such as I do not wish to see again ; and the pirates showed the terrors of men who knew the crimes of which they have been guilty, and therefore the more unprepared for a circumstance of the kind. They looked at one another with ghastly faces, and shook their heads, as much as to say, that they dreaded some accident would happen to them after this, and that a spell would rest upon the ship as a punishment for the savage murder of the unfortunate boy, and indeed I thought so too ; for surely, such a savage, cold-blooded crime as this, would not be suffered to go unpunished."

"But, did the captain see the ghost ?" inquired one of the sailors.

"Yes, he did," answered Dick ; "in fact, he was never out of his sight from that time, and he became a complete mad man. It was quite awful to hear him swear ; and then he would lay hold of anything that was handy to him, and deal such heavy blows in the air, as if he was striking at some object. We were all afraid to come near him, for he would not bear to be spoken to ; and he looked so dreadful, it was enough to make a person shudder to gaze upon him."

"Well, the vessel continued on her course, without falling in with any more prizes ; and indeed if we had, the men were so spiritless at the constant appearance of the ghost of poor Ben Walton, that they would not have the courage to have made any resistance, and we should be sure to have been defeated. That such an event should take place, you may be sure I was constantly praying ; for I was in a most wretched state of mind, while I was on board that damned piratical craft. Shiver my topsails, if I had had half a dozen of the swabs to deal with, and fair play, I could have beat them as easy as I could snap a biscuit. But then, yer see, there was no chance for that.

"Well, my lads, it was only a few days after the murder of Ben, that it came on a precious storm, and we were tossed about like a cork in a heavy sea. It blew great guns ; and as for managing the vessel, it was quite *un*-possible. Ah ! thought I, this is the penalty for the murder of poor Ben ! We shall none of us outlive this storm. And so the pirates seemed to think ; for they were all of them very dull, and as the captain madly dashed amongst them and gave his orders, in a hoarse voice, and with eyes flashing like those of a fiend, they treated him with indifference, and seemed to be callous as to what became of them, and did not exert themselves but very little, appearing as though they had made up their minds to meet with a watery grave. Two nights and three days we was tossed about in this manner, expecting that we should founder every moment. We had thrown all our guns overboard, and done everything we could to lighten the brig, so that if we had encountered an enemy afterwards, we should have been captured, there could not be the least doubt.

“ During this time, at least on each night, Ben’s ghost was constantly present to us all, no matter in what part of the vessel we were, there he was sure to be. Separate or together, every person on board was sure to see him ; and every night he would look more ghostly than ever. I shall never be able to scratch that from the log-book of my memory the longest day I am afloat. Every now and then he would raise a pitiful, wailing cry, which might be heard above the howling of the tempest and the roaring of the waves ; and then his eyes would glare so frightfully, that it was enough to freeze the blood to ice to gaze upon him. As for the captain, he had become quite unmanageable—perfectly mad ; and it was terrible to see him rushing to all parts of the vessel, covering his eyes with his hands, and trying, but in vain, to shut out the awful object which haunted him continually. And then his groans were terrific to hear ! The curse of his murdered victim was upon him ; and he was suffering all the torments of hell. Monster as he was, I could not help pitying the poor wretch ; but his punishment was not more than he deserved.

“ On the third day, I could perceive a strange change in the behavior of the pirate crew : they watched the movements of their captain with suspicious looks ; and alternately they collected in groups together, and consulted with one another in whispers. The captain had become totally incapable of giving any orders ; in fact he had completely lost his senses, and had stretched himself at full length in the forecastle, where he groaned and writhed in mental and bodily agony, without any one going near him, to offer to render him any assistance.

“ During this time, the ship was almost entirely neglected, and it was a wonder that she could live so long in such a storm. Our pumps were choked, and most of the crew stood looking at one another in despair, or with an expression of countenance which I could not very well understand. Hows’ever, I was very soon made acquainted with it. All at once, I noticed a signal made amongst about a dozen of the pirates, and in an instant they rushed to the forecastle from which the groans and curses of the captain could be distinctly heard.

“ In a minute or two they returned with him in their arms, and his struggles were terrific : it was as much as they could do to hold him ; and his face did look so awful—his complexion had become leaden, like that of a corpse ; he was foaming at the mouth like a mad person ; and his eyes shone with a fierceness that made them appear as if they could not possibly belong to a human being. He called loudly upon the name of Ben ; and with many horrible curses, begged of those who held him, not to allow him to gnaw at his heart, and to remove the red-hot coals from his brains. But the pirates heeded not his cries ; their minds seemed to be made up ; they bore him struggling desperately to the side of the vessel ; I covered my eyes with my hands to shut out the horrible sight, and the blood ran coldly through my veins. A moment more, and I heard a loud

splash in the ocean, which was followed by such a piercing shriek that I shall never forget it.

"I removed my hand from my eyes ; the sea-devil was gone ! but a supernatural light illuminated the deck, and shone upon the dark countenances of the pirates in such a manner as I never saw the like before, nor do I believe that the oldest man in the fleet ever did before me. Justice was done—the captain was tossed overboard to the sharks ; and, as I heard from the pirates afterwards, the moment the waves received his carcass, the ghost of Ben Walton appeared above the spot where he had disappeared, and, laughing exultingly for a second or two, became lost to the sight."

"Well, Dick," said the sailor, who had before interrupted the narrator, "that there is sartainly a tough yarn o' yourn, and I think you had better splice the main-brace before you proceed any furder. Drink, shipmates, and destruction to all pirates !"

"Ditto, repeated, as our chaplain used to say on board the 'Thunderer,' when he was swallowing off his sixteenth jorum of grog," observed Dick Taffrail, taking the glass in his hand, "and a sound drubbing to them, either on shore or at sea."

As the other sailor and Dick thus plainly gave expression to their sentiments, the man, whom they had designated captain, and his companions, looked round fiercely, and seemed half inclined to quarrel with them ; but after frowning upon them darkly, which the former returned with a look of perfect coolness and contempt, they removed their gaze, resumed the conversation they had been carrying on amongst themselves, and suffered Dick Taffrail and his friends to enjoy themselves in the way they thought best, without offering to interrupt them.

"I s'pose," said the sailor before mentioned, addressing himself to Dick,—"I s'pose arter the death o' the captain, the ghost didn't trouble yer agin, an' that the storm abated ?"

"No such thing," answered Taffrail ; "to be sure, we didn't see no more of Ben, but the vessel soon afterwards split upon a rock and went to pieces, and me and two others were all that contrived to get into the long-boat—all the others perished. I was driven about for three days in the boat before I was picked up by a vessel homeward-bound ; but my two companions had expired of fatigue and hunger three hours before, and thus I am the only survivor of that ill-fated vessel."

"And is that the whole o' your yarn, Dick ?" inquired another sailor.

"Th' whole of it ?" reiterated Dick. "To be sure it is, and a very tidy yarn too it is, I think, and every word on it is as true as if the parson o' the parish had told it yer."

"Talk about a shipwreck," remarked one of the companions of Dick Taffrail, "the loss of the Sea-Lion, eighty-four, in 1764, was one, when Sam Belson and I was exposed in an open boat for four days and a half, without any purvisions whatsoever, but half a dozen biscuits !"

"And survived arter all?" queried a rough-looking old tar, seated in the corner, with an incredulous leer.

"I did," answered the sailor; "but Sam didn't—he committed suicide."

"Committed suicide! That's rather an uncommon thing for a sailor to do. But how was it?"

"Why, I'll tell yer," observed Jack Spicer, which was the name of the speaker: "it was a very sing'lar death as Sam met with, and I was very careful in entering it in the log-book of my memory. Sam and I, as I said afore, was exposed in an open boat, and it was so cold that we could not speak to each other; the words were actually frozen in our mouths; and I recollect when I was picked up, and placed before the galley fire, as soon as I began to thaw, the conversation as I had intended to address to Sam, came from me so fast that I was almost choked, and the sailors didn't know what to make of me!"

"I dare say that's not at all unlikely," said Dick Taffrail, blowing a very stiff cloud, and wagging his right leg which hung over his left knee.

"Well," resumed Jack Spicer, "and it was very hard times for us, and die I certainly thought we must. We ate the biscuits in no time, and then we was so precious hungry, that we was ready to eat one another. Howsoever, I had rather a delicate appetite at all times, and I could sooner starve than do as my shipmate did. On the second day, I saw him look at his shoes very greedily, and presently he takes them off, one at a time, and crunched 'em before I could cry Jack Robinson. His trowsers was the next thing—they were canvass—but it was no matter to him: he tore the right leg away, and swallowed that in no time; and he seemed to like the flavor on it, too, for he tore the left leg away, and that went as quick as the other. He didn't eat any more that day, but the next he swallowed his jacket, shirt, and hat, while I sat and looked at him with an empty stomach, but couldn't follow his example for the life of me. When the third day came, he looked suspiciously at his feet, and he soon went to work on them!"

"Avast, avast there! mate," said Dick; "you don't mean for to go to say, as he devoured his feet?"

"But I do, though," said Jack Spicer; "they were only a bit of a snack to him, for his legs followed in a very short time afterwards. The next day he swallowed both of his arms, and part of his trunk, and on the fifth day he finished the latter!"

"And what then?" asked several in a breath.

"Why, he swallowed his head, to be sure; and after that jumped overboard in despair!" was Jack Spicer's reply. The sailors looked at each other, winked and laughed.

At this moment, the parlor door was opened, and the faces of all the guests were turned to see who was the person about to enter. It was Saib, the black, who upon seeing the man in the pea-jacket, made his way over towards the table at which he and his companions were

seated, without seeming to take any notice of any of the other inmates of the room.

"Captain Barnsley," said the African, speaking to the man whom we have before described, "I would have a few words with you."

"I am ready to hear you, Saib," said the former; "be seated."

"Not here," added the black: "our conference must be alone.—Can you attend me in another room for a few minutes?"

"Lead the way," said Barnsley, "I will follow you. I shall be with you again shortly," added he, addressing himself to the unprepossessing men who were his companions.

Saib immediately left the parlor, accompanied by Barnsley, and proceeded to a small room at the back of the premises, which he had previously bespoken of the landlord.

"So, you have returned again," said Saib, after he had closed the door; "what success have you met with on your last voyage?"

"Oh, glorious!" answered Barnsley. "Fortune never smiled more bounteously upon me, since I took possession of my noble craft."

"I am glad to hear it. But I need your aid."

"What would you?"

"You shall quickly hear," answered the black; "and when I tell you, that you will be handsomely rewarded for your trouble, I do not think that you will refuse me."

"You say right, Saib," said Captain Barnsley. "What risk is there, I should like to know, that Will Barnsley, the pirate captain, would not run to obtain the bright yellow gold? But what is it you would have me do?"

"First of all, you must swear, that if you decline my request, that you will never betray me."

"Avast, avast! there," exclaimed Barnsley; "there is no need for so much caution—you know me. As for swearing, if you cannot take my word, why there is an end of the matter, and you had better get somebody else to do your business."

"No, there is not any necessity for that, Barnsley; I know I can trust you, and will therefore open my mind at once to you. You know The Old Commodore?"

"Know it," cried Barnsley; "I should think I do; and many a time I have been there, if it was for nothing else than to look at and admire old Mat's pretty daughter. She is a fine lass, and I shouldn't care if she was entered along side of me in the log-book of matrimony."

"Of course, then, you know her sweetheart?"

"What, Tom Clewline, who has not long returned home?" said Barnsley. "Indeed, I do; and a fine fellow he is, every way worthy of the lass, although I envy him his good fortune. I like his acquaintance vastly, and wish we could nab him aboard our vessel; we want experienced hands, and he's an excellent seaman and a good navigator."

"That's the very thing I want you to do," said Saib, an expression of pleasure passing over his sable features. "You know this gallant Tom, as he is called, is no friend of mine?"

"Aye, aye," returned the pirate captain, "I know all about that; you would have him on board my ship."

"Exactly so."

"The task, mayhaps, will be rather difficult to accomplish," observed Barnsley. "What reward would you feel disposed to give?"

"Fifty guineas," answered the black.

"Fifty guineas!—I am at your service," cried Barnsley, eagerly; "and I am much deceived, if in less than a week, he is not aboard my vessel."

"Bravely said," exclaimed the African, "and I hope your surmises may prove correct; I may then not mind making an addition of a few pounds to the reward I have offered you. But has Tom any suspicion of your real character?"

"Suspicion," repeated Barnsley, "not the least. How should he? I have always managed to make myself agreeable while in his presence; and although we have been within hail of each other but a short reckoning, and met by accident aboard The Old Commodore, he has often told me, he thought me a good fellow—one who would like to do a good turn to any one in distress; and we have drank many a glass of grog together. I have longed to entrap him by some means or other: and before this, have frequently thought of getting the grog aboard, trying to sew up his daylights, and getting him into such a condition that he would have neither eyes to see with, nor ears to hear with. Hitherto, however, I have not had an opportunity of putting my wishes into execution; but I feel confident, that in a few days not only will Tom Clewline be in my power, bu his sweetheart, the pretty Ellen."

"What! and do you mean to seize upon the girl as well?" inquired Saib.

"To be sure I do," answered Barnsley; "what's the use of doing things by halves? I want the lass equally as much as I do the sailor."

"Ah! that will be more glorious revenge, still," cried the African. "But how do you propose accomplishing the task?"

"Leave that to me," answered the pirate captain. "You will not find me any dawdler—but, I must not remain here, for fear the real character of my vessel should be found out. Good night, Saib."

"Good night!" responded the black, and having shook the pirate's hand, he stalked from the house, and pondering with satisfaction upon the ready compliance of Barnsley, (or "Grim Barnsley," as he was commonly called) with his wishes, he hastened on towards home.

CHAPTER VI.

ROSINA, knowing the business Tom was going upon to the mansion of Fitzosbert, tried to dissuade him. She was unable to endure the apprehension which rushed upon her mind, and therefore re-

quested Patty to hasten to "The Old Commodore," to see if he had stopped there on his way.

Patty complied, although reluctantly, for she had just sat down to write a letter to her sweetheart, Toby Twitter, full of bitter reproaches and remonstrances, inasmuch as she suspected that he was faithless to her, as he had not been to see her more than twice since their return to Plymouth; and she had good reasons to suppose that he had placed his affections on a certain little black girl, who was on board the same vessel with them, and who was called Cheeti. As she was walking up a lane which led to "The Old Commodore," the voices of a man and woman met her ears. She looked through the hedge and beheld her faithless Toby and the sable object who had excited her jealousy. Great was her agitation while she listened to the following conversation:

"Ah! Massa Toby," said Cheeti, in a tone of reproach, "you bery much little naughty man—you win poor Cheeti's heart, bring her ashore, and den you want to desert her."

"Why, the truth is, my darling Miss Black Pudding," returned Toby, laughing; "something tells me that I b'ave not acted right, after the vows I have made to Patty, and I think our acquaintance had better cease at once."

"Ah, you bery bad man. You promise, when me get to England, to make me your chum-chum."

"Well, so I did, and I will not be worse than my word."

"Den you will make me your chum-chum?"

"Yes, my delicate little angel," said Toby, "as soon as we can make the necessary arrangements and I have broken off with Patty, you shall be made Mrs. Twitter. But where's the money you was speaking about?"

"Money! money!" reiterated Cheeti; "me thought you hab de money, Massa Toby."

"Nonsense," retorted Toby, sternly; "did I not acknowledge to you that I was as poor as a church mouse?—and did I not make it a particular condition of marrying you, that you should give me all the money that you said you had saved up?"

"Me know dat," said the black girl, "but dere be reasons for my not doing so."

"What, because you have not got any I suppose?"

"Iss, iss, massa."

"And did you expect that Mr. Toby Twitter would be so unfashionable as to marry a wife without money?"

"Me thought you one ob dose generous English dat———"

"Oh, then you are much mistaken," rejoined Toby, in a tone of disappointment, "being English is no reason for a man not making money one of his conditions when he intends to marry."

"I tought, Massa Toby———"

"Look you, Cheeti," said the faithless Toby, "that individual has very little right to the name of a man, who when a *fine* girl, like yourself, throws herself upon his honor, casts her off because she

can't pay her way into becoming a wife ;—but still, those four letters, G O L D, do make a wonderful difference in a case like this."

" Iss," replied the black girl ; " but dere be four oder letters dat make amends for dat, L O V E ; and dat is followed by two oders as is much better still."

" What are they ?"

" Good wife," answered the girl, laughing archly.

" Come to my arms, my pretty snow-ball," cried Toby, with much apparent rapture.

" Den I am your chum-chum for ebber ?" cried Cheeti, joyfully ; " I try wedder him heart in right place, and now I find it is, I tell you me hab lots of money."

" No !—Have you, though ?"

" Iss I hab."

" You take away my breath with surprise," said Toby. " Come to my arms once more, my little angel."

Again Toby Twitter embraced the sable damsels, while Patty looked on in a state of mind which only those who have felt the torments of jealousy can imagine ; but it was not a little increased when they commenced singing a duet, which she had not the least doubt they had well studied together from the correct manner in which they sang it. She then went sobbing home.

Will Barnsley, the pirate captain, and Saib, saw each other by appointment on the following day, and concerted their infamous plot against Tom and Ellen ; and it was agreed to endeavor to accomplish it without delay.

" The boy, Richard, too," said the African, on this their second interview, " you know him ?"

" Aye, to be sure I do," answered Barnsley, " and a fine lad he is : I only wish I could come athwart his hawse ;—he'd make a fine fellow for our business."

" Could you but manage to entrap him as well as the others," said Saib, his large, fierce eyes glowing with fire, " I could promise you one hundred guineas more to the sum I have already agreed to give you."

" Ah ! say you so ?" exclaimed Barnsley, eagerly ; " but why should you wish the boy to be placed under your hatches ? What can the boy have done to make him obnoxious to you ?"

" That matters not to you," answered the black ; " it is enough that I wish to get rid of him, so that he is not allowed to set his foot in England again."

" It shall be done, you may depend upon it ; leave Will Barnsley alone for succeeding in any plot he may have fixed his mind upon. But hark ye, Master Saib, no deceit in this affair. The money to be all forthcoming at the time specified ; and, if it is not, you—but I have no occasion to threaten yet ; you've known me before to-day."

" Right, right," answered Saib : " you have no occasion to doubt me ; there will be no treachery on my part ; but I hope you will use all the expedition you can in this affair."

"Aye, aye, you may be sure I will do that," said Barnsley, "for my own sake. I do not want to lie here, wasting my time any longer than I can help; but I am anxious to be upon another cruise. The ocean is my home, and I feel like a sea-gull in a puddle, when I am not upon it. Not many days shall elapse ere those I want shall be safe on board my brig, and then away we go like lightning before the wind, bidding defiance to any of the Government cutters to overtake us, for we outsail them all."

They departed, and Saib sought the presence of the Earl Fitzosbert, whom he had not seen since the scene which took place between them and Tom. He found him in a gloomy mood, his mind evidently affected after the interview above alluded to; and he was laboring under that state of doubt, suspense, and perplexity, which constantly rendered him so truly wretched. He was pacing his apartment with uneven strides, when Saib entered, and upon beholding him, he started, and seemed confused and violently agitated.

"My lord," said Saib, sneeringly, and with a look that showed he held Fitzosbert in his power, and felt for him the most superlative contempt, "when I left you, yesterday, I expressed a wish, when next we met, you might have recovered from that nervous debility which at that time afflicted you. But I perceive that my wishes are not gratified. Bah! my lord, this weakness would disgrace a whining, love-sick girl;—I am ashamed of you."

"You talk rather boldly, methinks, Saib," said Fitzosbert, sternly.

"I know no reason why I should fear to speak to you," returned the African, scornfully. "I owe you no obligation—and you are indebted to me for—"

"For all the misery, the torture—the incessant torture which racks my brain," added the Earl. "Oh, Saib, would that we had never met!"

"Well, we can quickly end our acquaintance, if you wish it," said the black, with an ironical grin, which rendered his features more hideous than ever; "but remember, I shall expect to share equally with you that wealth I have been the principal means of getting."

"Would that I could purchase a clear conscience at so cheap a rate," groaned the Earl.

"Pshaw!—enough of this foolery," exclaimed Saib, impatiently. "I came not here to talk of conscience, but to inform you that I have made such arrangements to remove the objects of your fears as cannot fail to succeed."

"Ah!" cried the Earl, eagerly,—"what mean you?—tell me—quick!"

Saib, in as few words as possible, informed Fitzosbert of the plans which Will Barnsley and himself had concocted, to which he listened with the gravest attention. A faint smile of satisfaction for a moment or two passed over his features; but it soon vanished, and was succeeded by the same expression of gloom and intense sorrow which had before beclouded it.

"Of what avail will this be?" said he. "From circumstances which have already taken place, we shall be suspected of having

been the cause of it, and, most undoubtedly, be brought to justice for it."

"Your childish fears will be the means of betraying us," returned Saib, in an angry tone; "but the stratagem shall be put into operation: I have so far proceeded with it, and I am determined that nothing shall now induce me to abandon it. I would advise you to banish those fears from your mind as soon as possible, or you may repent them when too late."

With these words, Saib stalked out of the room, without giving Fitzosbert time to make any reply.

Thus passed away a week, and Tom was a constant guest of "The Old Commodore;" and in the society of his beloved Ellen, and indulging in bright anticipations of the future, was extremely happy. Sometimes they would walk to the place which Rosina had made her retreat, and the two amiable girls in each other's society had no difference in their feelings, and soon became as much attached to one another as if they were sisters. The settlement of Tom and his sister's affairs had been placed in the hands of an eminent lawyer, and there was not any reason to doubt but that they would be speedily adjusted to their satisfaction. Tom had not yet quitted the service, and he had determined not to do so, although he expected a higher station than he had heretofore occupied.

Old Mat still persisted in keeping the purport of his interview with the stranger a secret, and it was noticed that he frequently went from home, and no one knew whither he went. The stranger was not seen again at the tavern; but dame and Ellen had reason to believe that he was residing somewhere in the neighborhood, and it was to him the frequent visits of Mat were paid.

Richard had by this time grown a fine lad, and his mind was as intelligent as his person and features were handsome. There was a certain nobleness and dignity in his general behavior, which seemed far above his station in life; and there were several who often ventured to premise, that he was not the nephew of old Mat. The voyage he had taken had greatly improved him, and he loved a sailor's life most enthusiastically. Bold, intrepid, vigorous, and enterprising, he possessed all the qualifications for a gallant seaman; and Tom looked upon him with no little pride, and declared that he would be an honor to the profession. On board the vessel, he had gained the respect and admiration of all the officers and crew; for he was so cheerful and buoyant, that he kept them all amused. His courageous conduct, by which he had saved the vessel and the whole of the ship's company, when the villain Saib made his diabolical attempt to fire the powder magazine, had gained him the gratitude of the officers and all the crew; and he not only received a handsome reward from the Lords of the Admiralty, but a promise of speedy promotion. Often the dame caught him watching the lad with more than usual earnestness; and then he would suddenly burst into a joyous laugh, which, when questioned about, he would make no reply to, but hastily leave the house, from which he probably would be absent for several hours.

This conduct created much surprise in the mind of the old woman, and she was all anxiety to learn why Mat evaded her questions, by merely observing, "that she would know all by-and-bye." With this reply, the dame was forced to appear contented, though she was far from satisfied; and her thoughts often wandered to the stranger who sought shelter at their house, and whose extraordinary likeness to Richard had so forcibly struck her. She could not help thinking that, in some way or other, they were connected.

Richard and Ellen were much attached to each other; in fact, had they been related by the ties of consanguinity, they could not have loved each other more. No thought, no wish, had Ellen, which Richard could not read; and, if it were in his power, how readily would he fly to gratify it.

They had been companions from childhood, and never had they been known to have a quarrel. Richard would be the first to resent what he considered to be an insult offered to her by any of their young companions. He stood boldly forth, even then, as the champion of his "pretty coz," as he was accustomed to call her, although Ellen was several years his senior.

Mat and his wife encouraged this attachment, although the former frequently hinted that probably, at some future period, circumstances might occur to interrupt it.

"Never!" exclaimed Richard, vehemently, one day when Mat had been making similar observations. "What! cease to love my dear cousin Ellen? Oh, uncle, I could sooner part with my life, than I could act in such a manner!"

"You are a good lad," observed Mat, "and I know you speak sincerely. Do not suppose for a moment, that I expect you will ever forget Ellen, or—but, who knows, there are strange things happen sometimes in the course of a person's life;—and who can tell but that circumstances may place you in a situation that ——"

"What circumstances can ever have the effect to make me forget my dearest friends? Why do you speak thus, dear uncle?"

Mat appeared to be rather confused.

"Why, you see, Dick, you may get on in the world and get promoted; and then, mayhaps, it might not be pleasant for you to acknowledge your old friends, and ——"

"Oh! it is impossible that I could ever act with such ingratitude let me ever remain as I am! Neither time nor circumstances can, I am certain, ever alter the sentiments I entertain towards you, my beloved uncle, aunt, and cousin Ellen; nor would I forget the love of you all, to be made King of England!"

"Noble boy, noble boy; damme, you will be made a Lord High Admiral before you die, and that's the truth of it. Dick, how should you like to be a gentleman?"

"A gentleman!" repeated Richard; "oh, I should indeed like to have plenty of money, so that I might make those independent that have ever been so good and kind to me."

"Nobly spoken again! Mark my words, Dick, you shall be a gentleman—you shall be rich, and ——"

"But why, my dear uncle," said Richard, "are you so sanguine as to my future fortune?—what prospects have I beyond what I may obtain by my own perseverance?"

"What prospects! reiterated Nat, sharply;—"what prospects!—why ain't you—but, avast, Mat! you are on the wrong tack—damme, if I know what I am talking about. But see, here comes Tom and Ellen; bless her pretty face, she looks as happy as an angel!"

Tom and his sweetheart now entered the house, they having been on a visit to Rosina, who kept herself as much secluded as possible, until the law-suit pending with the Earl Fitzosbert was settled. The conversation was therefore changed: but Richard had noticed the singularity of Mat's behavior, and it made a forcible impression upon him. He was confident there was more in the words than he could at that time understand; and he reflected deeply upon them. But why the words of his uncle should continue to haunt his memory, he was at a loss at the same time to conjecture.

He had walked forth from the house, and proceeded along the sea-beach, revolving the above mentioned circumstance in his mind, when, suddenly, he was aroused by observing a long shadow on the sand, and, looking up, he beheld, standing a short distance from him, with his arms folded in his mantle, the stranger, who had sought shelter in "The Old Commodore," a week or two before. He was immovable as a statue, and seemed to be gazing upon Richard with an earnest expression of the deepest interest.

For a few seconds Richard paused, and contemplated the stranger with a feeling equally as intense as that which seemed to occupy the bosom of the latter. There was something in the features of the stranger which riveted the attention of the lad, and caused a sensation in his breast, which, to him, was perfectly unaccountable. It was a sensation of the most unbounded esteem—a feeling that made his young blood glow in his veins—and he could have rushed into the arms of the unknown, and embraced him with all the ardor of filial affection. A deep melancholy seemed settled in the countenance of the stranger; but there was something so mild, so noble, and so amiable in its expression, that it excited immediate respect in the bosom of the beholder.

Determined at length to speak to him, Richard hastened on. The stranger did not move at first, and seemed so entirely absorbed by the thoughts that occupied his mind, as to be completely riveted to the spot; but when Richard had got near him, he suddenly turned round, left the spot with the greatest precipitation, and was quickly out of sight.

Richard stood looking in the direction the stranger had taken for some moments, and then made his way towards home, reflecting upon what had taken place. He felt an unaccountable interest in the stranger, and was anxious to ascertain who he was; but in that he had no prospect of succeeding. Do all he could, he could not erase him from his thoughts the whole of the day; and yet he was at a loss to imagine why he should so particularly engross all his ideas. The expression of deep melancholy which had struck the

lad most forcibly ; and he already sympathized in his misfortunes, whatever they might be.

These thoughts haunted his mind after he had retired to rest ; and in his dreams he again beheld the form of the unknown, and saw his fine, expressive eyes fixed intently on his countenance.

Suddenly, he was awakened by a noise in the chamber, and rubbing his eyes, caught a slight glimpse of what he imagined was some person in the room. He raised himself on his elbow, and looked eagerly around. The moon was riding majestically in the heavens, and her silvery light perfectly illuminated the apartment ; but Richard could not now behold any object, and concluding that it had been only fancy, he once more laid himself down and went to sleep.

Again, however, he was awakened by a similar noise to that which had before aroused him, and, jumping up instantly in the bed, he beheld, standing affectionately over him, the tall and handsome figure of the stranger.

For a moment or two after he saw that Richard was awake, and that he was observing him, he stood gazing upon him with a look of the most indescribable tenderness ; then sighing deeply, he raised his hands, as if invoking a blessing upon his head, and, turning suddenly towards the door, he had quitted the room before Richard had sufficiently recovered from his astonishment to speak.

Completely thunderstruck by what he had seen, Richard jumped from his couch, and went to the door ; but the stranger was gone, and he distinctly heard the outer door closed after him. On going to the casement, and looking out, he saw him hastening away in the direction which led to the high road, and shortly afterwards he was hidden from his view.

Confident that it was no dream, Richard now tried in vain to conjecture the cause of the stranger's mysterious visit to him, and how he had gained admittance to the house. He was inclined to think, however, that he meant no harm, although his motives for acting in so singular a manner, were entirely beyond his comprehension.

He knew he should not be able to sleep any more that night, and he therefore remained at the window, wrapt in thought, and gazing upon the fantastic shadows which were thrown across the road by the reflection of the moon-beams. Suddenly, however, his attention was drawn to two men, who had just turned a corner of the road, and were advancing in the direction of the house. As well as his sight would permit him to discern, the persons of the men appeared to be familiar to him ; and as they advanced nearer, he was not a little surprised to recognize Will Barnsley and Saib.

Wondering what they could want together at such a strange hour, and apprehending that they intended no good, (for Richard had never liked the pirate captain, although he had contrived to insinuate himself into the favor of Tom,) he was half inclined to arouse his uncle ; but then thinking it might cause considerable alarm, he abandoned the thought, and resolved to watch them narrowly instead.

They were evidently buried in deep conversation ; and from the extravagant gestures of the black, it appeared to be something of

importance. Having reached the house, they paused, and Saib looked up with a look of savage meaning, and addressing himself to his companion, said :

"In this house is one of the principal objects of my hatred ; the bane of my peace ; the hated brat, whom I——"

The wind carried away the other part of the sentence, and left the extraordinary curiosity which the tenor of the speech had excited in Richard's bosom ungratified.

"All is still in the house," Richard at last heard the black remark ; "the inmates are wrapt in sleep ; it would be no difficult matter to force an entrance, and then the deed I have before tried to effect, could be perpetrated without danger. By hell——"

"Hold!" exclaimed Barnsley, "would you spoil everything ?—What occasion is there for this risk, when all that you can wish can be accomplished in the way I have suggested to you, without the least danger ? Come away—come away—the morning will break soon, and I must aboard ! Fear not ; what I have promised you, I will accomplish ! Grim Barnsley never yet fixed his mind upon the execution of anything, which he afterwards failed in."

"Be it so," said Saib, turning reluctantly away, "I will trust to you."

"You may do so with safety ; the plot is ripening, and soon——"

Another gust of wind which swept around the gable of the house, again rendered the last words of Will Barnsley's speech inaudible ; but Richard had gathered quite sufficient from it, to convince him that there was some villainous stratagem in contemplation by the pirate and the Africæn, which was directed against himself and his family.

Will Barnsley had been a constant visitor at The Old Commodore, for the last few days, and Richard had taken notice of the particular attention he had paid to Tom and himself ; and the former had several times expressed a good opinion of the pirate, and said he was a very good sort of fellow, and just the man he should like to sail under, if he was in the merchant service. When Mat had expresssed a contrary opinion and said, that there was something very coarse and disagreeable about his manners, which was far from taking his fancy, Tom had combated it strenuously, and said, that although he was rather plain in his manners, it shewed that it was an honest, blunt disposition, and he liked him all the better for it.

Richard was, however, as we have before stated, far from being prepossessed in favor of the captain or his crew, who were all dark and savage-looking men, and inspired him with a feeling of dread whenever he beheld them. The lad, too, from certain things which he had noticed, and from words which the men belonging to her had inadvertently dropped, had strong suspicions that The Nancy was not a fair trading vessel, and had ventured to hint the same to Tom ; but he would not listen to it for a moment ; and reproached Richard for being too ready to suspect a thing. In fact, the fancy which Tom had imbibed for the society of Will Barnsley, was so great,

that he was with him at every opportunity, and nothing could be more favorable to the pirate's nefarious designs, than the present position of affairs.

The circumstance which Richard had observed, and the conversation he had overheard between Barnsley and Saib, he had no doubt would alter the opinions of Tom, and render him cautious not to be trepanned into any plot which might be laid against him ; so thought Richard, and we shall see whether or not his surmises were verified.

As soon as he heard the inmates of the house stirring about, Richard sought the presence of old Mat ; and in the first place, related to him all the particulars of the singular visit which the unknown had paid him. He of course expected to see his uncle evince great surprise, upon being made acquainted with this circumstance ; but to his astonishment, he evinced not the least emotion, and only said that he must have been mistaken, and have been laboring under the delusion of a dream ; for how was it possible that any person could gain access to the house without their knowledge, when he had himself seen that every door and window was properly secured before he had retired to rest ?

Richard, however, protested earnestly that he could not possibly have been deceived ; in proof of which he mentioned the circumstance of his having heard the stranger close the outer door, and also watching him from the casement afterwards. But Mat did not seem to like the subject ; and still affecting to treat Richard's statement with incredulity, he was about to leave the room, to attend upon his business, when Richard detained him and related what he had afterwards seen, and the brief dialogue he had overheard between Will Barnsley and Saib. Mat listened to this attentively, but with the same expression of incredulity, and when he had done, he laughed and said :

"Avast heaving there, Dick!—avast. You are throwing the hatchet a little bit, now I think, or else your top-lights were rather misty when you fancied you saw all these things. I tell you you have been dreaming, lad."

"Indeed, my dear uncle," answered Richard, vexed at the scepticism of his uncle, "I was as wide awake as I am at the present moment. They stood beneath the casement at which I had placed myself, and, as the moon was shining brightly at the time, I could see everything as clearly as if it had been broad daylight."

"Pshaw!" exclaimed Mat, as he turned away ; "the boy has become crazed to a certainty!—What should we fear from such lubbers, if even there was any truth about what you say?—It was all fancy—nothing but a dream."

With these words Mat retired from the room, leaving Richard disappointed and chagrined at the result of his communication.—Nevertheless, he determined to make Tom acquainted with the circumstance, and then if anything did occur, he should not have himself to blame for neglecting to give them timely warning. With Tom, however, he met with even worse success. The honest-hearted sailor, incapable of deceit himself, was not ready to suspect it in

others: he, therefore, strongly defended the character of Barnsley, and was of the same opinion as Mat. Richard determined, at all events, to keep a sharp eye upon the conduct of Barnsley, whenever he came to the house in future.

The malady of Fitzosbert increased: the knowledge of those persons whom he had injured being so near him, and a strange foreboding that the time was not far distant when his iniquities would be brought to light and shame, ignominy and disgrace descend upon his head, continually haunted his imagination, and made him wretched. The plot which Saib had formed, by no means gave him satisfaction; on the contrary, he never believed that he would succeed; and if he did he saw no hope of any abatement in his anguish, or the danger he was in from such a circumstance.

The insolent behavior of Saib also gave the earl considerable uneasiness; and there were times, when he could have rushed upon him, and plunged a knife to his heart, and thus have rid himself of the only one who was acquainted with all his dreadful secrets.

And now was the guilty Fitzosbert further tormented by the reports continually being made by the domestics, of strange noises that they heard in the house, at all hours of the night: and many of them went so far as to declare that it was haunted, and that they had seen a tall figure, enveloped in a dark mantle, stalking through the hall at midnight; and were nightly so annoyed by dismal groans, as if proceeding from some person in dying agony, that they could not sleep.

Every night these noises were said to increase rather than abate; and several of the domestics quitted the earl's service, declaring that nothing should induce them to remain in a house, which now seemed to have become the chosen haunt of some evil spirit or spirits.

On the day succeeding that on which Richard had seen Barnsley and Saib together, the earl had been more than usually melancholy, which was considerably increased by the time which the black had absented himself, he being always fearful of treachery when he did so. He felt uncommonly depressed upon the occasion we have mentioned, and a presentiment of some approaching calamity tormented his mind, which he in vain endeavored to shake off; but when night came and still Saib did not make his appearance, his anxiety and uneasiness became almost insupportable. He arose from the sofa on which he had been reclining, and walked to the window and looked out; but it was now quite dark, and he was not able to distinguish any other objects than the black shadows of the tall pines in the grounds attached to the mansion.

He returned once more to the sofa, and threw himself upon it—his mind was tortured, and his brain feverish. Suddenly, a deep sigh met his ear; and raising his head, he was horror-struck on beholding a tall figure, such as had been described by the servants, standing with folded arms exactly opposite to him, and with his piercing eyes fixed full upon his countenance.

The earl's blood curdled in his veins: his heart seemed to be fro-

zen into a lump of ice—his limbs shook with violent agitation, and in a voice of horror, he cried:—

“Christ save me!—Shade of the murdered Lionel, avaunt! I dare not—I cannot encounter thy dreadful gaze! Nay, fix not thy glassy eyes on me!—It was not I who struck the fatal blow!—Horror! horror! away!”

“Robert Fitzosbert,” said the supposed phantom, solemnly, “the day of retribution is at hand; repent and make all the atonement in your power ere it is too late! Ere long justice will overtake you, and a terrible punishment will be the certain reward for the many crimes you have perpetrated!—Beware!—repent!”

“Mercy! mercy!” shrieked the horror-struck earl, as he sunk back on the sofa, and covering his face with his hands, he became insensible.

To what a sense of horror did the wretched Fitzosbert awaken! The torments of perdition could scarcely be greater than the earthly hell he endured from the pangs he inflicted by his self-accusing conscience. That he had seen a phantom, he firmly believed; and when he recalled to his memory the ghastly looks it had fixed upon him, and the horrible words it had uttered, he shuddered with horror, and was almost afraid to remain in his chamber with no other person present than his medical attendant.

“Hide me! shield me from his awful gaze!” he would rave.—“Fools! why do you stand there gazing upon me, and not start forward to protect me from his terrible vengeance? Ah! see—he approaches towards me! His cheeks which erst were redolent of the bloom of health, now wear the hue of the charnel-house—his eyes, the filmy dimness of death! Oh, horror! I cannot bear the sight! Death—death itself, even in its most awful shape, would be preferable to this torture! He comes nearer!—He raises his long bony hands to grasp my throat!—I see his icy touch upon me!—Dead spirit of my murdered brother, mercy, mercy!”

The doctor looked upon the servants he had called to his assistance, and shook his head gravely; they followed his example, and shook their heads solemnly at one another, and slowly left the room. Fitzosbert shortly afterwards sunk into a state of torpor, from which the doctor having ordered him not to be disturbed, left the house.

We will now leave the wretched Fitzosbert for a while, and return to “The Old Commodore,” where the usual party were assembled, consisting of Tom, Will Barnsley, several of the crew of the pirate brig, and some other sailors from the different vessels then lying in the port.

More than a week had elapsed, and Saib and Barnsley, who had been constantly together, had so matured their plot, that they had not the least doubt of meeting with success, and determined to put it into execution on the following day.

Will Barnsley seemed in unusual spirits, and the grog passed briskly round,—mirth being the order of the day. The pirate captain acted his part remarkably well; although there were times when the surpassing loveliness of Ellen so excited his admiration,

that it was with extreme difficulty he could help betraying his real thoughts and wishes.

There was one, however, whose keen eye watched closely every action of Will Barnsley, and who read everything that was passing in his mind. This was Richard ; who, as he beheld the bold glances with which the pirate ever and anon eyed his fair cousin, felt his young blood boil with indignation, and he could hardly restrain the expression of his rage.

“ You say right, Tom,” observed Barnsley, in reply to something which the former had been saying ; “ you ought to think yourself one of the happiest fellows in the world to possess the heart of such a lass as your pretty Ellen—and you should love her —”

“ Love her !” interrupted Tom, vehemently,—“ love her ! damme, I cannot find words to give expression to the passion I feel for my Ellen ! She is my ship, my chart, my life. By day, by night—in the calm, and in the storm,—her image was always my beacon-light—the point from which the compass of my soul never varied. Whenever I see her, my heart is as light as a feather, and skips about like a cork in a fair breeze. And as I mean to remain in the navy, it is my determination not to go afloat again until I am spliced to her.”

“ It strikes me that you deceive yourself, my lad,” muttered Barnsley, aside. “ Well said,” he observed ; “ I like your spirit : as for me, the ocean is my only bride, and to her I am wedded, heart and soul. You have never inspected my craft, I believe, Tom ?”

“ I have not,” answered Tom, “ although you have several times invited me on board : I shall sail alongside of you some of these times though.”

“ You will not find a better vessel, for her size, in the whole merchant service, than the ‘ Nancy,’ ” said Barnsley. “ She stems the waves like a water-sylph, and is as graceful upon its bosom as a fairy. But I don’t want to speak so much in favor of her myself ; seeing is believing, you know ; but I would advise you to lose no time if you feel inclined to inspect her : we sail on Monday next.”

“ Splice my topsails !” exclaimed Tom, “ you are such a jovial fellow, that I wish I was going to sail with you.”

“ Perhaps you may have your wish sooner than you expect,” again murmured the pirate captain, aside.

“ What say you to to-morrow ?” asked Tom.

“ You couldn’t have selected a better time,” exclaimed Barnsley, scarcely able to conceal his joy, at the easy manner in which the honest sailor fell into his plot. “ I had almost forgotten that ; and yet I came here almost for the express purpose of inviting you to come on board to-morrow. It is the anniversary of my birth, and I always celebrate it on board my ship. We shall have a comfortable party ; and you need not fear to bring your pretty Ellen with you, for there will be plenty of respectable females aboard. What say you ? Will you persuade your sweetheart to honor the old captain with her company ?”

“ Aye, aye ; to be sure I will, captain,” said Tom ; “ and I know

she will be glad to sail with me wherever I think proper to cruise. We will sure be aboard."

"All right," said Barnsley, with a smile, which Tom took to be one of welcome. "I shall expect you at an early hour; but do not neglect to bring your sweetheart along with you, or it will be a great disappointment to us all. Here's Master Richard, too; will you not make one of the party, my lad?"

"I have business to transact in another place," replied Richard, with an air of much carelessness as the nature of his thoughts would allow him to assume, "and cannot avail myself of your invitation, sir."

"Avast there, Dick," ejaculated Tom; "I must not hear of any excuses from you: you must put off your business till the next day, for I am resolved that you shall go; and I know you would not like to be away from any place which was attended by your cousin Ellen. You may enter his name, captain,—I will answer for his coming."

Richard made no further objection, for he saw it would be useless; and he hoped that he should be able to persuade Tom to abandon all idea of fulfilling his promise. He now saw in a moment through the whole of the villainous design; and he trembled lest Tom should remain obstinate, and persist in going on board the pirate ship—for such he felt assured the Nancy in reality was—for that it was the captain's plan to detain them when he got them aboard; and to this he imagined that he was not only instigated by the miscreant Saib, but also from a desire which he had to get the beauteous Ellen in his power. He marked well the savage look of exultation which passed over the features of Barnsley when he elicited the assent of Tom; and he also noticed the change which his countenance evinced when he (Richard) endeavored to excuse himself from being one of the party, which were convincing proofs that his surmises were correct; and he was determined that there should be no exertion wanting on his part to endeavor to frustrate the design.

"At what time may I expect you?" demanded the pirate.

"Oh, I shall be on board early," replied Tom: "where there is merry-making, Tom Clewline is always ready at the first sound of the boatswain's whistle. Good night."

"Good night, my lad," said Barnsley, pulling up the collar of his pea-jacket, and unable to repress the feeling of gratification which filled his bosom at the thoughts of his success. "Come, my men."

With these words, the pirate captain and his companions arose and left the house, and Tom, Richard, and two or three other sailors, were all that were left behind. These, one by one, having finished their grog, retired also; and Tom, having kissed the cheek of Ellen, and heartily shook the hands of old Mat and the dame, prepared to leave the house.

"As it is a fine night, and I want to walk," said Richard, "I will walk a little way with you, Tom, if it is agreeable."

"Agreeable!" repeated Tom; "aye, to be sure it is; so just tow yourself alongside of me, and we will anchor directly, for my sister

is all alone, and will get as dull as a sailor without flip, if I do not soon rejoin her."

When Tom and the others had got out of sight and hearing, the pirate captain indulged in a hearty burst of laughter, to think how well his nefarious plans had so far succeeded.

"Fool!" he exclaimed, exultingly, "I did not think him such a swab as to fall so readily into the trap laid for him. Ha! ha!—how enraged and disappointed he will be when he finds out what sort of craft the *Nancy* is, and the character of the men he has to deal with. This is the best job I have had for a long while; and the girl even is worth all the prizes I have taken for the last two years. Well, she shall find the pirate captain not a bad companion—that is, if she does not attempt to cross me."

With these words, Barnsley and his companions stepped into the boat, and were quickly rowed alongside the pirate brig. When they got on board, Barnsley found that Saib was waiting to see him, and was all anxiety to know how he had proceeded.

"Well, captain, what success?" demanded the black, eagerly.

"Why as well as we could desire," returned the pirate.

"Ah!" exclaimed the African, while a grim smile passed over his sable countenance; "and have they fallen into our plot?"

"They have; and to-morrow they will be on board my craft."

"By hell! this is glorious," exclaimed Saib, in accents of triumph. "Barnsley, you have managed this business so far admirably!"

"Will Barnsley seldom fails in what he undertakes to perform," replied the pirate.

"But the brat, Richard," said the black; "what of him?"

"He will be one of the party," was the answer.

"Good! By my soul, Barnsley, if you complete this business with the same skill as you have begun it, you deserve an addition to the reward which I have promised you."

"And trust me, Saib, I will have it."

"Ah!" cried the black, looking suspiciously at the captain, "what mean you?"

"Oh! I dare say you understand me," remarked Barnsley, smiling significantly and sarcastically upon Saib—"this boy is a great eyesore to you and Fitzosbert; of course, it would not be very pleasant to either of you to let the world know this?"

Saib frowned; and, walking to another part of the deck, muttered to himself,—

"I have divulged too much: Barnsley already knows the advantage he has gained over me and Fitzosbert, and will, no doubt, avail himself of the opportunity I have thus thrown into his hands. Fool that I have been!—I have had to pay already dearly enough for it and it will cost me much more, ere I can accomplish my wishes. Curses light upon the ill-luck which has hitherto prevented me from putting into execution my schemes against the hated boy!"

Turning to the pirate captain, Saib said, "but, of course, Barnsley

admitting that you were certain of what you now only suspect, you would not be the one that would publish the same to the world?"

"That depends upon circumstances."

"You would never so deceive your friend?"

"Friend!—pshaw! I have no friends. I seek none. My maxim is to make as much as I can, and study no one but myself. That is the motive from which most persons act, although they may pretend to the contrary. You act upon that principle in your engagement with me, Saib, and of course I must make you pay for it. How far my service or my silence may be considered valuable, rests entirely with yourself, and ——"

"Come, come, enough of this, Will," interrupted the African; "you were not wont to talk thus."

"Perhaps not; but experience makes fools wise. That is the style I now choose."

"Well, I dare say we shall not quarrel."

"I dare say not."

"That boy might be easily tossed overboard."

"Exactly. And he might as well be sold as a slave, and then he would bring some profit for the trouble he may put me to."

"It would be better that he were given as food for the sharks, for they would end him."

"No doubt *you* think so," said the pirate significantly.

Saib scowled, and traversed the deck with uneasy steps. He now repented, or half repented, having confided so much to Barnsley, and above all, he regretted that he had made any arrangement with him about taking Richard at all.

"Well, well," at length he said, after a few minutes' reflection; "I think, after all, it will be as well to leave the lad out altogether."

"Here you and I differ," answered Barnsley, with another significant smile, which was anything but pleasant to the African: "I have no doubt I shall turn him to some account before I have done with him."

"Not if I can help it," muttered Saib to himself; "I must contrive somehow or other to prevent the boy from falling into your power, and I dare say I shall be able to dispose of him myself sometime or other. Well," he added, aloud, to Barnsley, "I shall leave everything to you; and of course you will not act otherwise than right?"

"Oh, of course not; I am a very *honorable* sort of a fellow—ha, ha, ha!"

"You seem in a merry mood, Barnsley."

"Aye, aye,—what's the use of being sad, especially when a man has the prospect of so much additional happiness?"

"What mean you?"

"Why the person of the pretty Ellen," replied the pirate; "is she not a prize, think you, sufficient to urge a man to anything to obtain possession of her?"

"You say right, Will," answered Saib, "and therefore ought you

to feel grateful to me for having put you in the way to obtain possession of her."

"Avast there, my sable land lubber!" said the pirate; "I should have had her whether or not, for she had taken my fancy; and previous to your making to me the proposition that you have done. I had fully made up my mind to have her in my power, if it cost me my life even in the attempt; and you know, Saib, that I am not one who easily gives up anything upon which I have fixed my mind."

"But methinks the eyes of her parents and her lover would prove too keen for you. They keep too strict a watch over her."

"They might keep a watch over her," said Will, "as if she was a barrel of gunpowder, expected to go off with the first spark; but they would have been sure to have found me too cunning for them. But come, there's enough of this: by this time, or before to-morrow, they will all of them be in my power."

"I hope so."

"And what is there to fear?"

"Did they seem to catch the bait easily?"

"Why, as for that matter, Tom has taken such a fancy to me—my usual *insinuating* manners have so got over him—that he thinks me one of the best fellows in the world, and was ready enough to accept my invitation. But the boy, Richard ——"

"Ah! What of him?"

"Why he did not seem to fancy it, and tried to excuse himself from being one of the party," replied Barnsley.

"The shrewd brat!" cried Saib, in a tone of vexation; "he guesses the whole plot!"

"Pshaw!—Impossible! But come, enough of this. Fear not, but all will be well and succeed as well as we can wish."

"I hope so."

"You'll take a glass of grog before you depart?" demanded Barnsley.

Saib nodded assent, and the pirate captain led the way to the forecastle, where the pirates had already assembled, and were carousing gaily, and Barnsley and Saib having joined them, riotous mirth soon prevailed.

After about an hour passed in this manner, Saib arose to quit the vessel, having informed Barnsley that he should be there on the following day to receive those he so mortally detested in a manner which his revengeful feelings dictated.

In the meantime, Richard, whom we left in company with Tom, intending to accompany him a short distance on the way home, did not fail to explain to him his suspicions as to the real character of Barnsley, and the treachery that was intended them, and endeavored to persuade him from going the following day on board the pirate's brig, according to the promise he had made Will Barnsley; but Tom only laughed at his fears, and finding that all the arguments he could make use of, would not be of any avail, he gave up the attempt, and

bidding Tom good night, separated from him, and made his way back towards The Old Commodore.

Richard, however, found it impossible to divest his mind of the suspicions it had imbibed, and he walked on at a slow pace, through the fields ruminating upon the subject, and darkness had completely enveloped the earth by the time he left Tom. It was a fine night, and therefore, he did not hurry himself, the air being refreshing. He had just emerged upon one of the green lanes, when his arm was suddenly arrested violently by some person close by, and looking around, what was his terror and astonishment to behold the fierce eyes of Saib fixed with revengeful fury upon him.

"Ah!" exclaimed the wretch, in a tone of exultation, which was perfectly fiendish, "the opportunity I have so long, so ardently wished for has arrived. I swore that you should not escape my clutches, and now I have you in my power, your doom is sealed. Hated brat—bane of my peace: the imp who foiled me in my deep laid scheme of vengeance, which would have immolated me and all my foes—this night—this hour, you die."

"Oh, Saib," ejaculated Richard, trembling with terror beneath the ferocity of his glance, and vainly trying to release himself from the fellow's powerful grasp, "why should you seek in the first instance to take my life. I never offended you; I could not have given you cause for anger, and cannot account for the hatred and revenge you have ever exhibited towards me. I implore you to release me, and suffer me to proceed about my business, and I promise you that no one shall be informed of the attack you have just made upon me."

"Fool!—idiot!" cried Saib, "think you the wolf will so easily resign his prey? Ha, ha, ha! You plead in vain; indeed your anguish but serves to add to my delight. This spot you shall never more quit alive. There is no one near—no one to rescue you, and give me over to punishment. Thus, then, do I perform the bloody deed for which I have so long prayed. Earl Fitzosbert, your fear will now be at an end. Die! hated offspring of——"

"Die yourself, you damned black swab!" exclaimed the well-known voice of Tom, just as Saib had dashed the lad to the earth, and was about to plunge a knife in his breast.

After Tom parted from Richard, some misgivings crossed his mind, and notwithstanding the anxiety he knew his sister would feel at his long absence, he turned back thinking to overtake him again, and resolved to be his companion back to the inn. It will be seen that he came up at the critical moment when Richard's life was about to fall a sacrifice to the diabolical vengeance of the African.

The report of a pistol immediately followed the words of the Gallant Tom, and then a cry of agony escaped the black, as he clapped his hand to his arm, and staggered back a few paces, crying, in a voice hoarse with rage and pain,—

"By the infernal host I'm shot! What foul fiend hath done this? Ah, the sailor—the—oh, curses light upon his head."

"Another word like that, you cowardly shark," observed Tom,

"and damme, if I don't blow your brains out directly. However, this shall be the last time you shall have a chance of gratifying your blood-thirsty disposition. If there is any justice to be obtained in the country, you shall be punished for this. But as I don't wish you to escape the retribution you deserve, I will bind up your wound, which seems to be an awkward one, and securing you to this tree, leave you here until I can get the officers of the law to lay their grapping irons upon you."

"May the bitterest malediction of the black man descend upon your head," vociferated Saib, groaning with rage and pain, while Tom, in spite of his kicking and biting him, persisted in binding up the wound in his arm with a handkerchief, and having fastened him to a tree, so that it would be impossible for him to release himself—in that far from agreeable situation he left him, hurried Richard away from the spot, and made his way to town.

In less than half an hour, Tom returned to the place where he had left the black, accompanied by a couple of officers, but was astonished to find Saib not there. He was extremely vexed at this circumstance, for he had hoped to put an end to all further annoyance from the African, but he had again escaped him. However, it was hoped that it would not be long before he was apprehended, and Tom immediately dispatched the officers to the mansion of the Earl Fitzosbert, to see whether he was there; but the earl assured them that he had seen nothing of his myrmidon since the day before, and appeared to be extremely agitated when the officers briefly informed him of the circumstance that had taken place.

"Bungling fool!" ejaculated the earl when left to himself, "he is always foiled in his rash and badly-planned attempts. And now do I more than ever see good reason for my being anxious that the plot laid by the pirate captain and Saib, to entrap Tom and the boy should succeed. They must be got out of the way, or when Saib is taken, which he undoubtedly will be, their evidence may be the means of concluding certain circumstances that will at once reveal the dark and nefarious deeds of which we have been guilty. Oh, what a weight of care, of continual fear and uneasiness does this guilt bring with it."

He traversed his room in a state of great agitation, and then summoned one of his confidential servants, and late as it was desired him to make all inquiries he possibly could, to ascertain what had become of Saib, and not to forget to see Captain Barnsley, and learn from him whether he knew anything of him.

The man returned in about a couple of hours with the information that Saib was on board the pirate brig, and was not so severely injured as had been imagined, but that he thought it would be advisable to remain where he was for the present, until after the completion of the plot.

It appeared, that soon after Tom and Richard had left him bound to the trunk of the tree as we have described, some of the crew of the pirate-ship happened to be passing that way, when they were attracted to the spot by the groans and curses of the black, and im-

mediately released him, and conveyed him to the vessel ; and thus the earl's fears were in a great measure quieted.

This event increased the surprise of Richard, and much increased his apprehensions, more especially when he heard of the escape of Saib, for which he was unable to account. He recollected the remarkable words which Saib had made use of in relation to himself and Fitzosbert, and when he added to them the recent circumstances that had taken place, he could not help thinking that there was some mystery connected with him, in which the earl was concerned, and which time would probably unravel. He slept but little that night, and when he did, strange visions haunted his imagination, and rendered sleep more fatiguing than his waking moments. Richard was heartily glad when he awoke and found it was morning, and he therefore arose and descended into the breakfast-room, where he found the little family already assembled, and awaiting his appearance.

"Why, Dick—boy," said Mat, after eyeing him for a moment, "you look as queer and as melancholy as if you had been put upon six-water grog. What's the matter with you?"

"I have not slept well," replied Richard, "and what little sleep I have had has been disturbed by frightful dreams."

"Dreams!" repeated old Mat ; "oh, there's nothing in them ; why, if what I have dreamt at different times had come true, I should at this time have been as rich as an emperor. But you have not greeted Ellen this morning ; she looks as pretty as an angel, and has rigged herself in her best. I warrant there is not a trimmer or a better looking craft going."

Richard saluted Ellen in an affectionate manner ; but his sadness he could not overcome, and it did not escape the observation of Mat and the others. "Well, splice me, Dick," said Mat, "I cannot make out what can be the matter with you. You should be merry to-day, as the invitation of Captain Barnsley —"

"The truth is," answered Richard, "I do not like that Captain Barnsley, nor the invitation he has given us ; I would fain dissuade Tom and Ellen from going on board his ship to-day, for I suspect him to be a pirate."

"Oh, father," observed Ellen, "something tells me that Richard's remarks ought not to be treated lightly. I would rather not go on board to-day."

"Nonsense!" cried Mat ; "you have both gone crazy, I think. For my part, I consider there is not the least cause for any apprehension of the sort. But what does Tom say about the matter?"

At this moment, Tom entered the room. "Oh, here is Tom," said Mat,—"just in time to speak for himself. Richard has been spinning a yarn, enough to give us all the blues. He thinks Barnsley is a pirate, and this invitation will turn out to be no good, and had better be avoided."

"Bah!" cried Tom, impatiently ; "you mustn't mind what Dick says on this occasion. My dearest Ellen, I see you are ready, and all as taut and trim as—but, damme, you are looking pale, and you

tremble! I suppose Dick's fears has been catching; but do not give way to them, while you place your trust in the great Commander aloft, and your lover is by your side, you have nothing to dread."

"I know it, Tom," said Ellen, with a sweet smile, "and will, therefore, banish the suspicions that, I confess, had taken possession of my mind, from the observations of my cousin, and which, of course, were only meant for the best, and made from the most affectionate motives."

"To be sure they were," said the honest sailor; "we are all liable to mistakes, you know. But, will you accompany us, Dick?"

"Will I?—certainly! But I am extremely doubtful whether you ought to treat the matter so lightly."

"Well, we shall see," said Tom. "Barnsley would soon be brought to his senses if he endeavored to detain me; for am I not a king's man?"

"You're right, Tom," said Mat, "and so there's an end to the matter, I hope. I wish you a merry day of it, and shall expect you before late at night."

"Oh, yes, father, (I soon shall have a right to call you so) never fear, I will convey my Ellen safe into port again before the moon rises." With these words, they shook hands, and separated.

Mat had affected to despise the suspicions of Richard, but was far from being successful. He several times repented having so readily given his consent to Ellen's going on board, more especially as he, after they had departed for some time, recollecting having seen Barnsley and the African, who had proved himself such an implacable foe, in earnest conversation together, and he was inclined to act upon the principle of "Judge a man by the company he keeps," yet he had never seen or heard anything from him, to cause the least suspicion, he therefore would not judge harshly of him, as Saib and he might have had business to transact of a nature quite foreign to anything wrong. Notwithstanding these conflicting thoughts, the day passed away uncomfortably with Mat and his wife; the latter, in spite of his precaution, having caught the infection. Twice during the day he walked to the beach, to see whether the Nancy was still at anchor, and having beheld her there, his mind became more at rest; although frequently half inclined to take a boat and row alongside the vessel, to see if all were right; but then the idea that he should be laughed at for his groundless fears, he abandoned the design and returned home. As evening approached, Mat and the dame became still more uneasy; and as twilight was rapidly declining into the more sombre shades of night, he hastened once more to the sea-beach, determined to row to the Nancy, and ascertain the reason they did not return home. Arriving, and eagerly casting his eyes across the ocean, he could not discover any signs of the Nancy. Horror-riven and astonished, he scarcely believed the evidence of his senses, but after a few minutes a full sense of the truth came across his mind. He inquired of all the persons whom he met near the spot, and particularly the coast-guard, how

ong it was since the Nancy had weighed her anchor, and whether they had seen or knew anything of Tom, Richard, and Ellen. These questions first directed the attention of the persons spoken to, to the subject of the sudden disappearance of the ship; and when Mat repeated his tale, and the manner in which Tom and Ellen and Richard had been decoyed on board, it was immediately concluded by everybody present that it was a pirate, and immediate steps were taken to go in pursuit of her.

In the meantime, notwithstanding the dismal forebodings of Richard, the gayety of Tom served almost entirely to dissipate the fears of Ellen; and by the time they reached the boat which was to convey them to the ship, she was nearly restored to her usual spirits.

Richard, ere they stepped into the boat, in which they found two of the crew of the Nancy awaiting their arrival, cast a doubtful glance towards the vessel, and once more endeavored to urge his suspicions, and persuade him to pause; but Tom only laughed at his fears, and said if such were his ideas, he had better not run the risk, then he could not blame him. Richard, ashamed to be thought afraid to encounter danger, and unable to bear the thought of quitting his cousin Ellen, proudly rejected the proposition; and, having stepped into the boat, they were quickly rowed alongside the Nancy, and went upon deck. Scarcely had they stepped upon deck, when they found themselves surrounded by a number of fierce-looking fellows, who exchanged glances with one another, and eyed the beauteous Ellen with looks of boldness that involuntarily made her shudder, and she clung closer to the arm of her lover. "Why, lass, how you tremble!" said Tom. "I wish Dick had not filled your mind with these qualms."

At this moment, a loud burst of coarse, uproarious laughter, mixed with oaths, made Tom start with amazement, and chilled Ellen with terror.

"They are rather jolly, certainly," said Tom.

"Oh, Tom!" ejaculated Ellen, "I wish we had taken Richard's advice: my heart misgives me."

"And not without good cause, I fear," said Richard, aside to his companions: "trust me, this is no honest vessel!"

"Eh—what—damme, if I thought ——" faltered Tom; "but no no, I will not believe it!—messmates, where's the captain?"

"This way, my lad," said one of the men, pointing to the door of a cabin,—"this way; he desired me to show you to him."

Before Tom could make any reply, the man had opened the door of the cabin, and Barnsley advanced to meet them, his features expressive of such strong feelings of exultation, occasioned by the success of his schemes, that it could not escape the observation of Tom and his companions. "Welcome, Tom, on board the Nancy; and you, fair lady, I greet you with pleasure."

"Aye, aye, captain," said Tom, answering for Ellen; "but where are our guests? Of course, you have some more females aboard?"

The pirate captain answered with an ironical smile, "eh?—no."

"Damme, I suspect!" cried Tom.

"Ha, ha, ha!" laughed the pirate; "I thought our build would astonish you. The Nancy is no cockshell. Eh?"

"Ah, we are betrayed!" cried Tom. Ellen, with a loud scream, fell fainting in his arms.

"Slip the cable and weigh anchor directly!" vociferated the pirate captain, to his men on deck.

"Weigh anchor!" ejaculated Tom. "Why, you damned—but you are only jesting, captain!"

"Jesting or not," answered Barnsley, "I do not suffer any lubber on board the Nancy to dispute my orders."

"Hello!" cried Tom, "here's a veer about. The vessel has set sail. You—you—you are ——"

"Behold!" exclaimed the pirate, pulling the black flag from the locker. "It is a well-known ensign—a terrible sight to eyes unused to it."

"The suspicions of Dick are confirmed," cried Tom. "You are a pirate."

"A free-trader is a better word. I have shown you our ensign—you are in my power. If you refuse to obey my commands, you may stand a good chance of being spliced to yonder yard-arm."

"Your commands! Why, I am a king's man."

"So much the luckier. You understand discipline the better. Why should the king have all the best hands? But, come; I will release you of your fair and insensible burden, the girl ——"

"Stand off! Dare not to lay a finger on this poor girl, for I will strike you dead at my feet!"

"Rash fool! at my order your brains would be scattered on the deck. But I shall be able to make you of service to me. Bear the girl to my cabin," he continued, turning to his men; "but harm her at your peril—she is the affianced bride of your captain."

"Liar!" vociferated Tom, half maddened with rage, as several of the pirates rushed upon him and forced his lover from his arms, and secured him and Richard. "Villain!"

"You may spare your epithets; they are only a waste of breath; you may be promoted to the yard-arm else. I have, however, an old acquaintance of yours on board, whom you may be happy to see." Thus speaking, the pirate captain made a sign towards the door which opened into an inner cabin, and immediately Saib came forward, and gazed with fiendish looks upon his victims.

"Tom Clewline," cried the African, "I triumph and exult in your misery. Ha, ha! in vain you writhe and foam with the power of your rage: you exhaust yourself in vain. Your sister, too, as you have called her, Rosina Burlington, ere many days, shall be the slave to the passions of the hated black, whom you ever have despised."

"You infernal black swab!" exclaimed Tom, glowing with indignation, "if these lubbers would only take their grappaling-irons off me, I would pour such a broadside into you that ——"

"Away with him below!" commanded the pirate; "I shall have some business with him by-and-bye."

"Nay, but for a moment, captain," said Saib; "his rage is food to my soul! And you, boy, you hateful brat, now I have you secure, and in a moment my knife can pierce your heart."

"Avast, avast," exclaimed Barnsley, "not so fast. The boy shall be disposed of as I judge proper. It is time you were away, unless you think proper to take a voyage with us. Boat ahoy, there!"

Saib stood gazing like a demon at Tom, until he was forced below, then sprang into the boat, which was swiftly rowed to the shore.

At sunrise Barnsley ordered Tom to be brought into his cabin, and Richard was soon afterwards placed beside him. "You see, Tom," said he, "resistance to me would be complete madness.—What say you—will you purchase your liberty in the ship, by entering your name as one of the crew?"

"Will you give me your word then, that if I give consent, you will not injure Ellen?"

"I will. And now what do you say?"

"Why," said Tom, in a well-assumed tone, "as I see it would be folly for me to oppose you, why, I suppose I must consent."

Richard started when he heard the answer of Tom, and fixed upon him a look of astonishment; but a significant glance from his friend quickly made him understand, and he became satisfied with the plan he could see he had in view.

"You agree, then?" demanded the pirate.

"Upon this condition, I do," said Tom.

"And the boy, will he follow your example?"

"Of what use would it be to remain obstinate?" said Richard calmly.

"Enough," said the pirate. "But remember, any treachery will be followed by a lingering death!"

With these words he bade them, with the men who still held them in custody, to follow him on deck, and having seen them enter their names in the book, said, "Mind how you act. There will be plenty on the look out for you. Away to your duty." As the pirate spoke, he started from the deck and entered the cabin in which Ellen had been placed under the care of a female who was on board. "Now my pretty lass, you must conquer your timidity, and take me for your lover."

"Away, away, monster!" exclaimed Ellen, and running to the foot of the ladder, "Help, help! Tom, where are you? Save me."

In an instant Tom sprang down the ladder, and stepping between her and the pirate captain, stood in an attitude of defense. "You infernal villain!" he exclaimed, "is this the way you keep your word? Damme, if you lay your grapping irons on her, I'll beat you till you have not a spark of life remaining."

"Mutiny, mutiny!" vociferated Barnsley. "You shall swing for this. What, ho, there my men! Death to the mutineer."

The men led Tom away; and prepared him for execution, when

the report of distant guns was heard, and one man on deck cried, "Sail coming up with us, on the larboard quarter."

"Can you make her out?" cried Barnsley.

"She is a British frigate."

"Ah," said Tom, "probably sent in pursuit of the bloody pirate." The man who had given notice of the appearance of the vessel, ejaculated, "She nears us—they're close aboard."

"Up men," shouted Barnsley, "if they attempt to board our decks, fire upon them. Life for life!"

He led the way, sword in hand, and the men followed him upon deck. The fighting was terrific, and for some time was doubtful on both sides. At length the pirate was boarded, and the carnage became dreadful. "Surrender, pirate!" cried the captain of the frigate, when he encountered Barnsley, "Surrender. Resistance is vain, you are charged with the violent detention of one of our men.—You are charged with detaining on board one Ellen Saunderson, and Richard, her cousin, and for many acts of piracy."

"All of which is true," returned Barnsley, with consummate coolness, "but I am not going to yield so readily. At the swabs again, my lads. Let us conquer or die." Encouraged by these words, the pirates rushed on their assailants and fought with desperate bravery, till they forced them to give way, many being driven overboard amid the buccaneers' demoniac shouts; others made for the frigate, but it was discovered to be on fire, and in a few minutes was enveloped in flames. In less than half an hour, the frigate was burned to the water's edge, and every soul on board perished. The pirate brig had by that time got far away from the scene of the late horrors.

The grief and distraction of Mat, his wife, and Rosina, at the disappearance of Ellen, Tom, and Richard, was powerful, beyond all conception. But the suspicions which Richard had given utterance to, and many other circumstances, that had come under his own personal observation, served to convince Mat that Barnsley was really what the lad stated he thought he was, and that he had had this design in contemplation for some time. He therefore made the circumstance known at the proper place, and the frigate was dispatched in pursuit. A week elapsed and nothing was heard of the frigate, and during this time, Mat and the others felt their suspense increase almost to an insupportable degree. But the news reached them on the ninth day of the fate of the frigate, and the escape of the pirate; and Rosina was reduced to a state bordering upon frenzy.

In the meantime, the earl and Saib exulted in the success which had attended their designs, and the former felt more at ease than he had done for years, and highly applauded the ingenuity and perseverance of his faithful creature.

After several weeks elapsed, it was known that earl Fitzosbert intended to get up some extraordinary festivities, to celebrate the an-

niversary of his birth, the principal of which was a masked *fête*, to which he had invited the neighborhood.

At length the day arrived, and never had festivity and mirth been known to be carried to such an extent before in the earl's mansion. The masquerade was got up with much taste, and every one attending seemed joyous and gay.

At length, the earl becoming somewhat apart from the rest of the company, was startled by hearing his name pronounced in a solemn voice, from behind, and turning round, he beheld the tall figure of a black domino standing before him.

"Fitzosbert," said the black domino, solemnly, "the blood of the murdered calls for vengeance; and the time is coming when retribution shall overtake the assassin. Tremble."

"Insolent intruder," cried the earl, fiercely, "who are you? for what purpose come you hither?"

A hollow, derisive laugh was the only answer given, but raising his mask, the eyes of Fitzosbert fell upon a countenance, the contemplation of which seemed to freeze the blood in his veins. He trembled as he gazed upon the phantom, (for such he supposed it to be,) with speechless horror. The black domino seemed to behold his emotion with satisfaction, then repeating the word "TREMBLE," he glided with the rapidity of thought among the joyous revelers.

For a few minutes the earl remained on the spot where the black domino had left him, then suddenly starting, in a voice which reached the ears of the guests, exclaimed, "Where is he? whither is he gone? He spoke of retribution. It was not I who——"

"Pshaw!" said Saib, who at the moment came up, but knew not what had taken place, "see you not the gazing listeners around?—By hell, your folly will bring you to destruction."

The earl gazed wildly upon the black, and then frantically exclaimed:—

"Ah, it was you who struck the fatal blow. Even now your hands are reeking with the blood."

"Idiot," exclaimed Saib, as he dragged the earl towards his apartment, where he was put to bed.

The festivities abruptly ceased, and the astonished guests, gazing upon each other with mysterious meaning, gradually dispersed.

The raving of Fitzosbert becoming terrific, Saib endeavored to pacify him. "Why should we fear," said he, "have not those from whom we apprehended danger been removed?"

"But my brother, Lionel——"

"Pshaw! his bones have been moldering——"

A deep groan interrupted him and made them both start; but what was their horror to behold the same dark and mysterious form, which had before so awfully alarmed the guilty Fitzosbert, standing in the distant part of the chamber.

The countenance of the supposed phantom was fully revealed to them, and its ghastly complexion; the supernatural expression of the eyes, and the well-known features, smote their hearts and en-chained all their faculties.

"Spirit or demon!" cried the black, "I will ascertain the truth of this." With these words, Saib rushed towards the spot where the form stood, but before he could reach it, a hollow sepulchral laugh resounded through the apartment, and the mysterious figure vanished.

"By hell! this is strange," muttered the African, returning to his terrified master; "can then, the dead rise up in judgment against us? Pshaw, I am getting as weak and fearful as Fitzosbert. Would that death would do its work with him, then should I fear but little. In his frenzy, he may disclose all; and destruction to us both be the result."

Thus passed away a week. Fitzosbert secluded in his own room, gave himself up to melancholy, and soul-harrowing reflections. As for Saib, he was seldom at home, and invariably since the mysterious event had slept out.

One evening as Saib was returning to his lodging, having to pass by The Old Commodore, curiosity or some unaccountable impulse induced him to peep through the casement into the parlor; judge his astonishment and delight, when the first object upon which his eyes rested was Rosina. She was seated in the company of Mat and wife; and although the most poignant anguish was depicted in the countenances of them all, the African thought he had never before seen her look so handsome as she did on that occasion. Scarcely could the miscreant keep his rapture within the bounds of prudence, and as his eyes gloated upon the form of that girl whom he had marked for his victim, he could scarcely suppress a laugh of demoniacal exultation. Here then she was all but in his clutch; but should he attempt to seize upon her then? No, it would be rash to do so, and would be sure to be frustrated; for there were, doubtless, persons in the tavern, who would lend their assistance to Mat, and she would be easily rescued from him, and himself brought to punishment for the outrage he had not only committed upon her, but Richard; and although all evidence of the latter offence was safely removed, he would be placed in a dilemma which would not be desirable. Knowing the need of caution, he came to the conclusion to be near the house, until she took her departure when he might watch whither she went, and at some future period devise a plan by which he might with safety seize her, and bearing her to some place of security, have her entirely in his power, and enforce her to submit to his will.

* * * * *

In about an hour Rosina arose, and putting on her cloak, it was evident that she was about to depart, and shortly afterwards she quitted the tavern accompanied by Mat. With the utmost difficulty did Saib keep from revealing himself to the poor girl and forcing her away from her companion; but he did resist the temptation, and followed them at a distance, contriving to keep them constantly in sight, and concealing himself from their observation. In this manner he followed them to within a short distance of the house in which Rosina at present resided, and after bidding Mat good night, he saw her enter, and the latter began to retrace his footsteps to the tavern.

Saib suffered him to pass on, and then walked closer up to the house, and went round it, gazing up at every window, with looks of the most unbounded satisfaction and exultation. At length fearful that he might be observed, and thus his designs be frustrated, he turned away from the spot, and hastened towards the house where he himself lodged.

While these events were going on shore, the sufferings of those at sea, as may be conceived, without much difficulty, were most poignant. After the engagement and disastrous fate of the frigate, Will Barnsley ordered Tom once more to be brought before him, and having now made up his mind to die, endeavored to meet the untimely fate, to which he imagined he was being led, with becoming fortitude. But to reflect that his Ellen would be left in the power of the pirate captain, and forced to a compliance with his desires, was almost more than he could endure, and the honest tar's heart swelled to nearly bursting.

When he came before the pirate, he found him surrounded by several of the crew, and among others, manacled like himself, was Will Barnsley's lieutenant, who had betrayed him.

"Now, Sirrah!" he cried, addressing himself to Tom, "you have seen, I should think, the folly of endeavoring to disobey my commands; your life is forfeited: but as you are a good seaman, I believe, I will grant it you on your promising that you will not so offend again. What say you,—will you give the required promise?"

"If you promise me not to harm my Ellen," returned Tom, "I will give my consent, but not without, for damme, though I may be slung to the yard-arm the next moment, if I see any one, be he man or devil, lay a finger upon that poor girl, I will level him with the deck in an instant!"

"Well, I am disposed to try you," said Barnsley, "but beware.—The least sign of mutiny, and you swing in a moment; as for injuring your Ellen, as you call her, my intentions are quite different, as it is my design to make her my wife."

"Your wife!" exclaimed Tom, in a voice of indignation.

"Aye," answered the pirate captain, "and so you will see in a short time. But enough of this for the present. Here is the fellow who betrayed us—hear you his reward.—Lash the rascal to the gun, and cut the flesh from his bones."

In a moment the unfortunate man was stripped, and secured to the gun, and then two pirates, by the order of the captain, came forward, and prepared to flog him with a couple of rope-ends, bound round with fine wire.

A thousand lashes were inflicted on the poor man, which he received without scarcely uttering a groan, and then being released, he was tied to the yard-arm, where, shortly after, he expired.

"Thus will I punish all who would betray me, or disobey my orders;" exclaimed the pirate captain, "and therefore, you may see what you have to expect, should you infringe upon our laws. Away to your duty, and beware."

Tom was released from his fetters, and walked away. Had it not

been for the sake of Ellen, he would quickly have put an end to the state of misery in which he was involved, by leaping overboard, and preferring a watery grave to any association with such wretches; but hope, also, had not entirely forsook him; and he endeavored to keep up his spirits as well as possible—an effort which he accomplished more effectually than could have been anticipated.

Two days out of three passed quickly away, and the morning of the third dawned, and a most terrible morning it was. The thunder rolled fiercely through the high vault of Heaven; the lightning blazed with fearful violence; the wind blew a perfect hurricane; the waves rolled mountains high, and the brig was tossed about like a straw. In this manner it continued with unabated fury throughout the day, and at night it seemed rather to have increased than abated.

Barnsley, notwithstanding the raging of the tempest, and the imminent danger in which they were placed—it not being expected that the vessel could live one moment from another—had been with Ellen, and had once more urged his hateful suit, in more urgent terms than before, when, suddenly, the ship lurched frightfully—a terrific crash was heard, and several voices, in tones of despair, shouted that she had sprung a leak, and Barnsley rushed hastily from the cabin, leaving the door open behind him. Great as were the terrors of Ellen, they did not so far overcome her strength as to prevent her immediately leaving the cabin, and hastening upon deck, where the miscreants, desperate as they were at other times, were now pale and trembling at the prospect of death, and every one was using such precautions as the time would permit, to rescue themselves from the danger by which they were surrounded. The ship was rapidly filling, and completely frantic with despair, Ellen screamed aloud, just as her eyes fell upon Tom and Richard, who were looking around them with frenzied eyes, as if in search of some particular object. In a moment the poor girl was once more enfolded in the arms of her faithful lover.

Not an instant, however, had they to exchange a word together: the vessel was rapidly filling, and every one was seeking the means of escape. There was a simultaneous rush towards the long boat, when Tom, feeling desperate at the situation in which they were placed, clasped Ellen in his arms, and thrusting several ruffians aside, he sprang with her over the side of the vessel, and reached the boat in safety. He was instantly followed by Richard, and amid the yells and execrations of the pirates—several of whom fired at them—the boat was unloosed from her hold, and in a moment was drifted by the fury of the waves far away from the sinking brig. An appalling shriek from the drowning wretches immediately afterwards convinced them that all was over, and that the pirates had met the fate which their crimes so richly merited.

All three of the inmates of the boat, were too much engrossed and appalled by the horrors of the scene which surrounded them to suffer them to speak; but Tom looked at Ellen with an expression which was meant to inspire her with hope, and then directed

nis attention, with that of Richard, to the management of the vessel in which they were ; but all management, all control over the boiling billows, by which they were tossed as it were to the clouds, were entirely out of the question, and they were obliged to commit themselves to the mercy of providence, suffering the boat to take its own course, and expecting every moment that they must perish. Every instant they expected she would capsize, and they were hurried along with the most furious precipitation—the efforts of Tom and Richard to guide her being all but useless. The fury of the storm increased, rather than abated ; the roaring of the wind, the heavy peals of thunder, and vivid flashes of lightning, at intervals, were terrible to behold. They were drenched to the skin, shivering with cold, and in addition fast sinking with the great fatigue they had undergone. The honest tar raised his eyes towards Heaven, and mentally breathed a prayer for their preservation, and then with renewed strength occasioned by the imminent peril in which they were placed, he applied himself to the guidance of the boat.

Richard behaved himself with a steady courage and composure, which could not have been expected in one so young ; and indeed, his only care appeared to be for the safety of Ellen and her lover. Yet, to meet death under such circumstances, was awful, particularly when he thought of the heavy grief it would occasion Mat and his wife—a grief from which, he felt confident, they would never recover.

For more than an hour they were tossed about in this manner, every instant being placed as it were upon the very extreme verge of eternity, and excluded entirely from hope. It was truly awful to look over the fierce raging ocean, and watch the waves with their white crests, as they soared to the sky, each one carrying a death with it. Wildly the sea-mews screamed ; and the thunder's loud voice alone drowned their cries. At length they espied what they imagined to be land at no great distance from them, and with clasped hands, and expressions of gratitude, they returned their thanks to the Almighty, and prayed that they might be able to reach it with safety.

Aroused to fresh energy by this circumstance, they—that is, Tom and Richard—again plied themselves to their task, and they were rewarded for their exertion by observing that they rapidly neared what they hoped would prove the goal of their deliverance. As they approached it, however, they perceived that it was a rock, and they feared lest their frail bark should be driven so rapidly against it as to be upset.

Fortunately this did not turn out to be the case, and they reached the rock in safety. The difficulty then was to reach the summit.—They got the boat as gently as they could beneath the rock and then Tom sprang from it, and with much difficulty clambered up the craggy sides, until he reached a small ledge, where he could rest. Luckily there was a small coil of rope in the boat, which the sailor desired Ellen to fasten round her waist, and then to throw the other end to him, and commence the attempt to clamber up the rock, he

assisting her all that was in his power. This was done, and Ellen, again imploring the aid of heaven, did as her lover requested her, and succeeded better than could be expected. Tom put forth the whole of his strength, which was nearly exhausted, and it was at length crowned with success. Ellen was drawn with safety to the ledge, and ultimately reached the rock. Richard with all the activity of youth, quickly followed them, and then they all three sank upon their knees, and in accents of sincerity returned their thanks to Omnipotence for their deliverance from the jaws of death. But their joy soon vanished, when they looked around them and beheld the wretched place upon which they had been cast. It was a barren rock, completely destitute of any signs of vegetation; and what hope was there for them, unless some vessel should pass near into which they might be received, no other prospect stared them in the face, but a dreadful, lingering death by starvation.

The storm had now entirely ceased; but they were perishing with cold and wet, and looked upon each other with despairing eyes.

"Alas! my poor Ellen," said her lover, "never did your Tom expect to see such a day as this. I care not for myself—but to see you meet so terrible a fate, tortures my heart to madness."

"Nay, dear Tom," replied Ellen, "I entreat you not to give way to this sorrow; if it is to be my fate, you cannot avert it; and we should not arraign the will of the Almighty."

"You are a good, dear girl," said the honest tar, as he kissed her pallid cheek, and in spite of his manly efforts to the contrary, could not resist the tears that rushed to his eyes; "you talk so like an angel, that even in the midst of this danger, it joys my heart to hear you. But it is much easier to talk about it, than to practice it, when I see you suffering in this manner."

"Your anguish only adds to mine, Tom," returned she, "to behold you suffer, is worse to me than all the other troubles that can attend me."

"I know it—I know it, my lass," cried Tom, fervently, "and for that reason will I endeavor to do as you desire. Surely that Power which keeps watch over us, will not suffer us—or at least you—to die this miserable death."

Night rapidly approached, and as darkness began to veil everything around them, their situation became more appalling, but they were so overpowered they soon fell asleep.

Neither of them awoke until the morning dawned. Tom looked eagerly upon his Ellen; she was pale and ill, but she smiled, and endeavored to conceal what she was suffering. And now it was that they felt the gnawing pangs of hunger, and they had not the least means of allaying it. They gazed upon each other with looks expressive of the utmost horror.

The day passed away like the previous one, and not the least sign of help appeared. At length, completely exhausted, like the previous evening, they fell off to repose, and did not awaken until day-break. They then found themselves so weak, that they could with difficulty rise, and could then only stand for a few minutes.

"I shall go mad," ejaculated the distracted sailor, as his sweetheart, unable longer to support herself, sank with her head upon his bosom. "What shall I do? She will die. Dick, Dick, for the love of Heaven, go in search of water once more."

Just at the moment Tom spoke, Richard came running towards him with a strength imparted by sudden joy, and shouted aloud:

"Ah, see! Behold!—a sail! a sail!"

"A sail, a sail!" reiterated Tom to Richard's joyful cry, and stretching his eager eyes in the direction to which Richard pointed. "It is true. I clearly behold the white sails which seem to be steering in this direction. Heaven grant that it may turn out to be a fair craft, and we are saved!"

He tore the kerchief off his neck, and waved it above his head, as a signal of distress, and Richard followed his example, at the same time shouting with all his might.

At length it was evident that the persons on board the ship had seen their signal, as they fired a gun, and approached nearer, and put off a boat with two or three men in it, which made for the rock, to render them the assistance which they wanted.

It reached the rock and the men called to them to endeavor to descend it. This was a terribly difficult task, weakened as they were by hunger and fatigue; in fact, Ellen was so much reduced that she could scarcely walk; and Tom and Richard, as may be expected, were both in a very little better condition. Tom, however, laid hold of her arm, and they began to descend the rock, which, after much difficulty they accomplished, and were assisted into the boat by the men, who as Tom supposed, turned out to be Englishmen, and the vessel was a British merchant ship, homeward bound. Richard having followed them, the boat was pushed off and made for the ship, which they reached in safety.

They were received with much kindness, and upon being briefly made acquainted by Tom, of the misfortunes they had met with, the captain ordered them to receive every nourishment and assistance his vessel afforded, and their distressed condition required. Ellen was placed under the care of the captain's wife, who was on board, and was a very amiable woman, and paid her every attention; while Tom and Dick were well provided for, and were not long in recovering from the effects of their late suffering.

The miscreant, Saib, having discovered the retreat of Rosina, was determined that he would not lose so favorable an opportunity for gratifying his desires by getting possession of her person. He said nothing to Fitzosbert, and trusted that in less than a week the maiden would be securely in his power. He exulted as these thoughts crossed his mind—he laughed aloud in triumph.

"Proud, scornful beauty!" he cried—"yes, thou shalt be mine.—Nothing shall save thee. To obtain thee, I have run many risks, encountered many dangers, but have hitherto been foiled, but this time she is all but secure. Her brother is away, and she has no one to protect her; when I get possession of her, I shall have the earl

more securely in my power, and he will be compelled to resign her fortune to me."

Fitzosbert felt uneasy that Saib absented himself so frequently from the hall, and he scarcely knew how to act. He was fearful to give up the wealth of Rosina to his keeping, and yet he trembled at opposing the wishes of Saib, for he knew well, from bitter experience, the implacable temper of the African, and the revenge, he would in all probability seek.

Saib avoided the hall as much as possible, and when he did go, he did not let a sentence drop which could lead Fitzosbert to arrive at the knowledge of his intention.

He watched constantly near the place in which the unsuspecting Rosina lived, but for several days she did not present herself. At length evil fortune favored him: he met her as she was returning from the inn in the evening, and across the wood. She had prolonged her stay there beyond her usual length, and, buried in melancholy conversation, had not noticed its getting so late. As the villain beheld her approach, his exultation was so great that he could not repress a demoniac peal of laughter, and concealing himself behind a cluster of trees, directly in the way which he knew she must come, he prepared to seize her. Rosina passed the spot where Saib was concealed, and he let her proceed for a short distance before he offered to obstruct her; stealing forth, he approached behind her with hasty steps and threw his arms around her.

Rosina turned, alarmed at such sudden rudeness, and saw the eyes of Saib gloating in lustful fondness upon her.

"Oh, help! mercy!—save me," she shrieked, struggling to escape.

"Thou callest in vain," observed Saib,—"there is no one at hand to hasten to thy rescue. Come with me, girl—thou must come with me, I say."

Again she screamed, and tried all her power to escape from his hold, but her struggles were futile, and overpowered by the violence of her feelings, she fainted.

Saib then raised her in his arms, and had proceeded some paces, when he heard the report of a pistol, felt himself wounded, and sunk to the earth, at the same moment that some one snatched the insensible form of Rosina from his arms, and a well-known voice smote the ears of Saib, exclaiming.

"Take that, you infernal pirate! and if that aint enough, I have another ready for you!"

Saib looked up with astonishment, rage, and consternation, and his feelings may be readily imagined when he beheld Gallant Tom, Ellen and Richard, standing before him.

"Ah," cried Tom, as he hung over the form of Rosina, "shiver my timbers, if it aint my sister Rosina. Why, you first cousin to the devil, if I ain't a good mind to send another brace of bullets through your upper works. Rosina, sister, look up and speak to me. It is your brother returned to save you from a villain, and be your future protector."

Saib groaned aloud with the intensity of his mental and bodily agony, and staring at those who stood before him with looks of terror and incredulity, he ejaculated,

"Powers of darkness! this cannot be real. My enemies, whom I thought for evermore secure, returned! But, no, no; it is some infernal mockery! My eyes must have deceived me!"

"But your eyes have not deceived you, you black shark," returned Tom. "It is, indeed, those whom you no doubt thought were gone to Davy Jones's ere this, and who have returned in the very nick of time to your confusion. This shall be the last trick of the kind you will play, depend upon it: for if the wound I have given you, which appears to be an awkward one, does not do your business, the hangman shall for you!—Ah, Rosina!"

At that moment Rosina recovered, and, staring around her, she ejaculated,—

"Ah, that voice! those well-known tones, where am I? whither have you brought me?"

"Rosina—dear sister," cried Tom, in a voice of most indescribable emotion, "it's no dream; it's your brother; 'tis Tom, Ellen, and Richard who have returned in safety, and—"

A loud scream from Rosina, whose eyes were fixed on them alternately, during the time Tom was thus speaking, interrupted him, and giving utterance to his name, she threw herself into his arms, and once more became insensible.

The villain, Saib, lay writhing in agony and rage, and his eyes rolled fiercely, first on Tom and the insensible damsel in his arms, and then upon Richard and Ellen.—Curses and imprecations then rose to his lips, and he tried in vain to rise from the earth. At that moment, Tom was placed in a dilemma, and knew not which way to act, for he could not think of leaving the wretch Saib, behind him—and how was he to take him away without assistance?"

While he thus hesitated, pressing Rosina with the most unbounded affection to his heart, and imprinting warm kisses upon her lips, he heard the shouts of men outside, and looking in the direction from whence the sounds seemed to issue, he beheld several of his shipmates approaching that way, and the next moment they came up to the spot where the singular group was standing.

"Hollo!" exclaimed one of the sailors, "what's the meaning of this? Tom Clewline here, with a female in his arms, and that black ruffian wounded and bleeding?"

"The fact of the matter, messmates, is," answered Tom, "that this poor lass is my sister, and yonder black swab is the same that you have heard me talk of, who endeavored to fire the powder magazine, and has made several attempts upon the life of this lad. He would have borne my sister away, only I happened to steer this course, and bore down upon him just in time. I think I have given him a settler; but it is no more than he deserves. Just stow the lubber in some place of security for the present, messmates, I have a precious long account to settle with both him and his rascally master. Now then, Ellen, my dear girl, see if you can restore this

poor girl ; the sudden surprise has been too much for her. Oh ! I could serve that wretch ten times worse than he is already, for being the cause of all this trouble, but the time for his receiving his reward is not far off."

Tom gently placed his sister upon the stump of a tree, while Ellen, with the most affectionate solicitude, procured some water from a neighboring brook in a shell, and sprinkled the face and bathed the temples of the unconscious girl.

In the meantime, the sailors, in compliance with the request of Tom, seized the wounded black, and in spite of his violent struggles, and hoarse muttered maledictions, raised him from the earth, and having bound his legs and arms with their handkerchiefs, they were about to bear him away, when at that moment a tall figure in a dark mantle made its appearance before them, in whom Tom and Ellen immediately recognized the mysterious stranger who had sought shelter at "The Old Commodore," and whose strange conduct, and ambiguity of manner, had since been the cause of so much speculation among them. Richard no sooner beheld him than he felt a peculiar sensation of unaccountable awe come over him, and he gazed at the stranger with the most intense and indescribable interest.

"Ah !" cried Tom, "this strange-looking craft here again ? What can he want, I should like to know ?"

"Tom," said the mysterious man, "I am glad to see that thou hast returned, and in safety, for now will that vengeance, that retribution, which has too long slumbered, descend upon the head of the guilty."

The African fixed a look of wild scrutiny upon the mysterious form before him, whose face was concealed from observation, and his lips quivered fearfully, as he cried—

"That voice ! that figure ! Mysterious being, who art thou ?"

"Villain !" answered the stranger, in solemn tones, "the hour is near at hand when thou shalt know. Tremble ! Tom, let him be conveyed to a place of proper security, and now listen to me."

"Take the black rascal to 'The Old Commodore,' until we have finally settled what we shall do with him. Now, stranger what is your business with me ?"

Saib was carried forcibly away, amid the shouts and scoffs of the sailors, and then the stranger, who seemed to have been contemplating the lad Richard, with much emotion, said,

"Tom Clewline, as you are called, Providence has made you the instrument of bringing about those events which, doubtless, will restore the injured to their rights, and bring shame and punishment upon the guilty ; and the hour is not far off when justice shall be done to every one, and Fitzosbert and his myrmidon meet with the reward due to their crimes. To-morrow, the usurper, little imagining what is brooding in the web of fate, gives another masked *fête*, at which I desire you and your friends, but more especially the boy Richard, to be present. Do not hesitate to accuse Fitzosbert of the

most heinous crimes, nay, of murder ;—I will be at hand, and speedily bring the result I have in contemplation."

" Why," returned our hero, " if one may judge by your words, you are an honest sort of chap, and therefore, I will do as you request me."

" Enough, then, to-morrow you meet me for justice!" said the man of mystery, and after approaching Richard for a moment, who had involuntarily knelt at his feet, he raised his hands above his head, as if invoking a blessing upon him, bowed to Tom and the others, and immediately retired.

" Well," said Tom, when he had gone, " he certainly is a very funny fellow, and I don't know what to make of him. How devilish fond he seems to be of Dick, too."

With these words, Tom linked his arms in those of Rosina and Ellen, and, followed by Richard, they departed with all the speed they were able towards the house of old Mat.

We have informed the reader of the scene which took place between Toby Twitter and Cheeti, and which was overheard and witnessed by Patty ; we have also described the indignation of the latter at the infidelity of that little man for whom she had run such risks. Patty was a true woman, with all the foibles and weaknesses of her sex ; what was more, she possessed all the ardent and sincere passions which usually prevail in the female breast, when they fix their mind upon any particular object ; consequently, although Patty was very indignant at the improper conduct of Toby, and had made so many protestations to hate, despise and abandon him, her heart throbbed for him with a passion as warm as it had ever done, and she sincerely wished for an opportunity to effect a reconciliation, notwithstanding she declared most positively, that " she would not have him if every hair of his head was hung with diamonds."

" The little brute," she soliloquized, " the—the ugly little monster ;—to go to desert me for a black woman. Oh, never let him come near me ; don't let him venture to show his nasty, ugly phizimiogomy to me, or I'll commit manslaughter upon him, or my name is not Patty !"

With this laudable resolution Patty walked out of the house, and, singular enough, took the very way in which it was more likely than any other, that she should meet the object of her resentment.

Now be it understood, that whatever failings Toby Twitter might possess, should be attributed more to the head than the heart ; and although he had in a moment of weakness yielded to the persuasions of his sable inamorata, in his serious moments he repented of the promise he had given, and would gladly have retracted it, could he have been certain that when he had done so, he should be able to effect a reconciliation with Patty.

" How shall I act," he ruminated, " I am divided between love and gratitude ; black as she is, I must confess that I love this little Cheeti, and yet gratitude and honor deinand that I should forget her, and place Patty on the throne of my heart. I am in a quandary—I am at a loss—let me see—black is a good standing color, and—"

"Is it, you wretch," said a voice close to his ear, "oh, you vile man—you base deceiver?"

He turned round and beheld Patty by his side, who seemed ready to bestow summary punishment on him for his infidelity.

"Now, now, Patty," interposed Toby, in a mild, humble tone, "only hear me."

"I won't hear you, nor listen to you," cried Patty; "to go for to desert me for that nasty, ugly, black girl."

"Why," observed Toby, "I must admit, Patty, that that was a black piece of business; but then, Cheeti has got money, and you have none, and, therefore, you could not expect that such a thing would have its effect upon a gentleman possessed of a h-independent fortin of eight pounds, thirteen shillings, and a penny ha'pny yearly per aniwum. I am willing, however, to make a sacrifice—and a great one it is—I will discard Cheeti, and take to my jewel of inestimable price again."

"I'll not have you! You're a-a-a wretch—a-a brute—a cannibal."

"Blood of the Twitters! She calls me a cannibal. Hows'ever, Patty, I don't know that you are much out there, after all, for such a girl as you is enough to make any man savage. Besides, I had good reasons for my conduct, for as you took to wearing the breeches before marriage, what could I expect you to do afterwards. So, you won't have me?"

"No, I will not."

"Then," said Toby, hitting the crown of his hat, with much mock dignity, "then I pity your want of taste, and wish you a very good day."

As he thus spoke, he prepared to leave her, upon which, Patty thinking she had gone too far, said aside to herself,—

"I am afraid he is serious, and must alter my tone. 'Toby,'" she added, in one of her kindest and most insinuating tones,—

"Well," he answered, with assumed fierceness.

"Toby, could you go to leave your poor, faithful Patty in this manner?"

"Yes! didn't you refuse me, and call me brute, monster, cannibal?"

"But I was in a passion, then, and we women often say many things that we do not mean. Now, my dear, darling, good-looking Toby."

"Gammon," said he, as she placed her arm in a coaxing manner round his neck, "I suppose these are some of the silly things that you do not mean?"

"No, indeed."

"Then you are serious."

"Positively."

"And you'll never upbraid me after we are married?"

"Never!"

"Nor want to wear the breeches?"

"Certainly not."

"Then come to my arms, my duck of diamonds ;—these female angels are the very *devil*!"

They embraced fervently, and thus ended the quarrel of Toby Twitter, and his faithful Patty.

We need not inform the reader that the vessel which had afforded Tom, Ellen, and Richard a shelter, after the danger and suffering to which they had been exposed, brought them home in safety, and the kindness of the captain and all the crew towards them, excited their utmost gratitude. But, how shall we describe the meeting which took place between them and Mat and his wife, on their unexpected and sudden restoration to them ? Language must fail ; and, therefore, we leave the task to the conjecture of the reader. Mat appeared little surprised at the behavior of the mysterious stranger ; and when he heard what he had said, and the promise Tom had made him, the old man exclaimed, while an expression of satisfaction overspread his venerable countenance,

"Yes, my children, by all means obey the wishes of this singular being ; and something persuades me, that not only is the hour of retribution at hand, but that to-morrow will reveal certain circumstances that will, doubtless, fill you all with the greatest astonishment."

"Hollo," said Tom, "what's in the wind, now ? Why, Mat, any one would suppose that you were on intimate terms with this strange craft, and were possessed of his secrets."

"To-morrow, as I before said," returned Mat, "will disclose everything. Till then, we will drop the subject."

Here for the present the matter ended, although every one present thought it was evident that he knew more than he thought proper to reveal, and their impatience for the arrival of the next day increased.

The miscreant Saib, was confined in an out-house which adjoined the tavern, and his wounds having been properly dressed, he somewhat revived, although the medical man who attended him stated that the wound he had received was mortal. Fearful that he would sink under his wound before the following day, and that they would thus be deprived of the principal witness of the guilt of Fitzosbert, Mat and Tom several times visited him during the night, hoping to be able to elicit from him a confession of his crimes, and of the dark deeds, in the perpetration of which it was suspected he had been connected with the earl.

Several times during the night he was delirious, and in those moments the wild ravings to which he gave utterance left them very little room to doubt the truth of their surmises. Towards morning he became more calm, and listened to their solicitations without evincing any impatience ; and, at last, desiring he might be removed into the house, he promised to confess all. His wishes were complied with, and then, in a faint voice, spoke as follows :

CHAPTER V.

CONFESSiON OF SAiB.

“ FEELING the hand of death upon me, and stung with remorse and a guilty conscience, I wish to make all the atonement I can, by acknowledging the heinous crimes of which I have been guilty, and bringing retribution on the head of him, who, by tempting offers of lucre, first led me into villany and bloodshed.

“ Lionel Earl of Fitzosbert, the elder brother of the present usurper, was my master, originally having purchased me from slavery in Africa, and brought me to England, where he educated me, and showed me all the indulgence that a master could show his servant. Alas ! how did I repay him for his kindness ? The sequel will too plainly show. My time is short, and my strength is almost exhausted ; therefore I must run over my narrative of blood as quickly as possible.

“ Soon after the birth of a son, the Countess Fitzosbert died, and the earl became quite an altered man, abandoning that life of retirement in which he had before resided, and mixing with the political world, at the time when it was beset by the most violent storms, in which he became implicated. Towards his brother, who was his junior by about two or three years, he behaved with the utmost affection and liberality, resigning to him a large portion of his property bequeathed to him by his late father, and insisting upon his continuing to reside with him, but, notwithstanding this, soon after I came to live in England, I could perceive that he viewed the earl with eyes of envy and hatred, and it was not long ere I discovered that my surmises were just.

“ Robert Fitzosbert soon began to take particular notice of me, and took every opportunity of conciliating my friendship, by making me presents, and many other advances to my favor. Although I hated and despised him in my heart, his gold was tempting, for I was naturally covetous, and by degrees he so completely won upon me, as to venture to confide to me his thoughts and wishes. It was then I discovered that his ambition was to become the possessor of the title and estates of his brother, and that he could see no other way of arriving at the gratification of his desires, than by the death of Lionel and his infant son Julian. So completely had he lured me to his diabolical purposes by his accursed gold, that I was induced to listen to his proposals, and ultimately to become the panderer to his wishes. The assassination of the earl and his son was agreed upon, and an opportunity soon presented itself to put our infernal scheme into execution.

“ The earl, having been accused of some political offense, deemed it prudent to quit his mansion for some time, and retire to the Isle of Wight. I did not accompany him, but it was agreed that I should follow after him, and meet him at a certain part of the coast. I did so. We got into a post-chaise to go to the place he had fixed on for his residence, and he had his child with him.

"I had managed my murderous plot;—I had agreed with three russians (whom I had become acquainted with on board of the vessel which brought me to England) to attack us at a certain place, and they did as I desired them. The unfortunate earl, with the boy in his arms, was dragged out of the vehicle, and, with my own hands, I stabbed him in various parts of the body, and inflicted what I thought to be a deadly wound on the boy. After this we divided what money the earl had upon his person, equally amongst us, and drove the chaise into the sea, but left the bodies where we had murdered them, being alarmed by some persons who, we thought, were approaching the spot. I parted with the russians and have never seen them since. Soon after this I returned home, and as it was not known there whether I had been to, suspicion never lighted upon me. In the course of a few weeks all inquiries after the earl and his son having proved unsuccessful, his brother, who affected the most violent grief, took to himself the titles and estates of Fitzosbert, which he has retained ever since. This is the truth, as I hope for mercy from that Almighty Judge in the presence of whom I shall shortly stand."

"But why was your hatred so excited against Richard?" demanded Tom, "and why did you so often seek his life?"

"Because," answered the black, "in him I discovered the son of the late earl Fitzosbert, whom I had imagined I had murdered, and the rightful heir to the earldom and property of Fitzosbert."

"Ay!" exclaimed Tom, in a voice of astonishment, "splice my timbers! here's a discovery! But you're not spinning a yarn, are you?—Oh, damme, if I didn't think that young Dick was born to be a great man!"

Saib repeated his assertions, and then becoming faint, they no longer thought proper to torture him with questions. In the course of the night the unhappy wretch rallied, and he became not only more composed, but his pain seemed to be greatly alleviated. All chance of his recovery, however, was evidently at an end, and they were at times fearful that he would not survive until the following day, and thus frustrate a design they had in contemplation, by which the utter defeat of the villain Fitzosbert would be certain to be accomplished, and the innocent have ample justice done to them, and be restored to their rights.

In the meantime, the guilty Fitzosbert had been informed of the attempt which Saib had made upon the life of Richard, and the consequences that had followed, and his horror and consternation were excessive. Should Saib in a moment of weakness betray the dark secret they had for so many years succeeded in concealing, ignominy and destruction would be his inevitable fate. In a state of distraction he sent down a peremptory order to Mat to deliver up to him his servant, on pain of future proceedings; and the old tar sent back an equally peremptory answer, stating that he should do no such thing; and that perhaps, ere many hours were over his (the earl's) head, he might have reason to think that he did not care even the cracking of a biscuit about him or his boasted power. To

this message Tom added another of the same description and bade the earl prepare to give a little explanation upon certain matters, which he might consider anything but agreeable.

The rage and consternation of Fitzosbert, when his servants returned to the Hall, with these answers, were extreme ;—he stamped and raved with passion, and it was with the utmost difficulty he could contain himself.

“Ah!” he cried, raising his clenched fist to his burning forehead, “my worst fears are but confirmed ; the dastard knave Saib has disclosed all, and my crimes are made known to my enemies.”

That night he passed in a wretched state of mind ; regretted that he had set the following day apart for a second great fete, as his spirit would by no means be in unison with the festivities that would be going forward. He would have put it off ; but then again he was fearful that by so doing he would be the cause of exciting some suspicions that might ultimately be the means of bringing about the result he so much dreaded ; he therefore resolved that the fete should take place, and that he would endeavor by every means in his power to appear unusually gay on that occasion.

There was, at a very early hour, a brilliant assemblage, and the mirth and gayety that prevailed around appeared to be universal. Yet, in spite of his endeavors, and the many deep libations he took, did the uneasiness of the earl increase, and he frequently arose from the festive board, and walked to some obscure part of the saloon, so that he might give free indulgence to the thoughts and feelings that tortured him. It was upon one of these occasions that he heard his name pronounced in accents he could never forget, and raising his head, he was horror-struck at once more beholding the tall and awful figure of the domino. He started, and trembled in every limb, while his countenance turned pale, and he was unable to give utterance to a word. The domino stood for a second or two, and his eyes, through the black mask which he wore, sparkled fiercely upon Fitzosbert, while in the same awful and sepulchral accent in which he had before addressed him, the former said :

“Robert Fitzosbert, thy time is nearly come ;—the injured are at hand to seek for justice ;—tremble !”

“Avaunt ! avaunt !” he cried, in frantic tones : “I cannot—dare not gaze upon you ! My blood freezes in my veins as I look upon thee ! —Away, fiend—spectre, avaunt !”

As he thus spoke, the domino raised his mask, and again the guilty Fitzosbert gazed upon features that smote his soul with horror.

He staggered back to the table at which he had previously been seated, and covered his face with his hands in a state of agitation we are at a loss to portray.

In the meantime the supposed phantom vanished amongst the numerous guests.—Fitzosbert was soon aroused by receiving a salute from a heavy hand upon the shoulder, and raising his head, his bewilderment and surprise were excessive when he beheld Gallant Tom at his elbow.

"Ah!" he cried, starting from his seat, "you here?—what means this intrusion?"

"Oh, you will know all presently," replied Tom, with the utmost coldness; "I thought you might not think my visit very agreeable, but I have called to pay my *respects* to you, and to thank you for the kind service you and your sable dog did me, my Ellen, and young Dick, by getting us a birth on board the "*Nancy*," under that highly respectable individual, Will Barnsley. But I will introduce you to one or two more of your old acquaintances whom you did not expect to see."

Thus speaking, Tom motioned to three female forms that stood close by, and immediately removing their masks, Rosina, Patty and Ellen stood before the wonder struck and guilty Fitzosbert.

"Damnation!" he cried, starting back,—"Rosina; What demons are at work to torture me?"

"You shall see," replied Tom, and waving his hand, in a moment, Saib, dying, was led in by Mat and two or three others and confronted his horror-struck master.

"What means this?" demanded Fitzosbert, in a trembling voice; "Saib here?"

"The meaning of it is this," returned Tom; "Saib has again been attempting the life of Richard, and has met the reward he merited. Since this he has become penitent and confessed all his crimes and yours too, and a nice lot they are."

"Ah, wretch!" said Fitzosbert, his eyes glancing with a look of the most unutterable resentment upon Saib.

"The black man's career is nearly ended, and the implacable spirit he once possessed is broken;" said the African, faintly, "but on you, Fitzosbert, who first incited me to crime, and made me the wretch that I now am—may my most bitter, my dying curse descend,—draw around," he continued, looking at the guests and motioning to them,—"draw around, and listen to the tale of horror I have to unfold."

The guests did as he desired them, in the utmost amazement, and then Saib repeated that confession with which the reader has been made acquainted.

During this recital the rage of Fitzosbert knew no bounds, and he was with the utmost difficulty, prevented from rushing upon the expiring black. Immediately after the latter had come to the termination of the guilty confession he gave one dreadful groan of agony and sunk a corpse upon the floor.

"Oh, believe him not," cried Fitzosbert, "the story he has told you is a fabrication from beginning to end."

"Villain! thou liest," replied a loud voice, and immediately the mysterious stranger appeared, leading in Richard by the hand;—"the substance of that unhappy wretch's narrative is true, and thou knowest it;—but Providence hath preserved both thy much injured brother and his son; behold to thy confusion, they both stand before thee."

The domino threw off his disguise, and Lionel Earl Fitzosbert, and

his son Julian, hitherto known as Richard, stood before his guilty, conscience stricken brother, and the astonished guests.

" My son ;—my own dear boy ;" ejaculated the earl in a voice of the most uncontrollable emotion, and embracing Julian with the most delirious transport.

" Father," replied the lad, " and have I, then, one on whom I can bestow that endearing title ?"

" Tear them asunder ;—it is horror to my eyes , " cried Fitzosbert his lips livid, and every limb palsied with terror ; " do not let them embrace. Fools, why do you hesitate ?—Nay, stand off ;—do not dare approach them. Do you not see he is not of this world ?—Look, how the thick clotted blood stains his bosom :—Ah,—he is still there. He mocks my anguish.—Retribution—retribution he demands ?—There, do you not hear him ?—He approaches me ! do not let him grasp me !—will no one aid me against my ghastly foe ?—Off—off, dread phantom of my murdered brother !—I do not acknowledge my guilt—but I cannot meet thy reproachful gaze !—Oh, horror !"

Overcome by his feelings, he sunk into the arms of two of the guests who were standing by. Suddenly his countenance became frightfully distorted, and he appeared to be struggling for breath. He attempted to speak, and the next moment the blood gushed from his eyes, nose and mouth ; he had ruptured a blood-vessel, and soon died.

CONCLUSION.

Lionel Earl Fitzosbert was, of course, reinstated in his rights that had been so long usurped by his guilty and unnatural brother, whom he interred with all the pomp he was entitled to by his rank, and with him, he buried all recollection of the wrong he had done him.

The restoration of the Earl to his rights was hailed with much delight by all who lived in the neighborhood, and many gentlemen who had formerly had the honor to enjoy his friendship, flocked to congratulate him on his fortunate escape from death, and the most miraculous manner in which his son had been restored to him. Richard felt none of that extravagant joy which might have been expected at his sudden elevation to rank and fortune, neither did he forget his former benefactors, (on whom the earl fixed a handsome annuity,) and he never called Ellen by any other title than his " pretty Coz."

Gallant Tom, as he still liked to be called, and his sister, Rosina, having now fully established their consanguinity, took a handsome house near that of the Earl Fitzosbert, with whom they were on terms of the most ardent friendship.

In about two months subsequent to the events we have been narrating, Tom, whom no change of fortune could alter, led his lovely Ellen to church, and fulfilled the vows he had so long plighted to her. A joyful day was that in Plymouth ; there was nothing but cheerful faces to be seen : and Tom invited the whole of his old shipmates to partake of his hospitality, and the festivities got up, on that auspicious occasion.

We have little more to add : Tom rose to great eminence in the

navy, and was much beloved as an officer as he had been respected as a private man. He lived to see a numerous family around him, all inheriting their parents' virtues;—and it is not many years since he was called up aloft.

The Earl Fitzosbert lived to a good old age, esteemed by every body, and was gratified by beholding his son nobly earn the laurels which afterwards bedecked his heroic brow. His life was full of daring adventures, worthy to be celebrated in romance. These adventures may hereafter serve us with materials for a sequel.

Rosina was united to a gentleman every way worthy of her love, and their days were passed in that felicity, which cannot fail to be the reward, when affection and virtue are combined.

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